THE COMMONWEAL

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ROOSEVELT AND TAMMANY

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT will most likely be the Democratic presidential candidate in 1932, first because he carried New York and second because he did it by a landslide. In political calculations these two factors are such as to outrank all others. Secondary considerations are that he is stronger in the South, especially Georgia, than any other candidate, and that there is nothing about him which engenders fear of a bolt. The dry South is reconciled to the nomination of a wet, so far as the party organizations are concerned, and in the South that is what matters when nominations are being calculated upon.

Since the Democratic candidate in 1931 has a better chance of election than any of his predecessors since 1916, this preëminence of Governor Roosevelt among Democratic candidates makes it at least possible that the next President will be another Roosevelt. That being the case, there are certain urgent considerations to be examined without regard to his prejudice or favor, since he will be in the national mind for at least a year and a half. The first in importance, is the part which Tammany has hitherto borne in New York Democratic affairs and the part which it is to bear from now on.

In the first place, "Tammany" is a nickname; the correct name of the thing it stands for is "the Democratic party in New York City." It used to mean only New York County, but the nickname has now been extended to all the five boroughs. In every community, even the smallest, there has to be a party organization, and this is the Democratic one in New York City. Owing to the unfortunate mental habit of personifying everything, Tammany has come to personify, all over the country, a sort of individual, usually an unpleasant type of individual; whereas the Democratic party in the five boroughs is made up of as diverse characters as that in Terre Haute or Bangor. Tammany means, in short, the majority voters of the city, who in voting generally show a marked individuality in choosing candidates, as the widely varying election returns for different nominees always show.

There is a general disposition to classify a New York state Democrat as a Tammany man, because Tammany is the voting stronghold of the party in this state. Memories are short, and the reason for this classification is historically very recent. The upstate organization used to be very powerful, so much so that it often defeated and even crushed Tammany,

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or New York City, in Democratic conventions. For about thirty years it has been under New York City's thumb, and few are the memories that go back a longer period than that. But what has been once can be again.

In the particular case of Governor Roosevelt, New York has elected a governor who owes nothing whatever to New York or its alias, Tammany. The "up-state" has been supposedly rock-ribbed, and in calculating it has been the custom to figure on how large a majority the Republican candidate will "bring down to the Bronx" and how many votes can be cast below that river to overcome his unquestioned lead. But this year it was the Democrat who came down to the Bronx; Roosevelt carried nearly all the up-state by majorities which would have elected him even if Tammany had lain down on the job. He has no debt to Tammany, though it is only the part of decency for him to recognize that a majority of the voters live below the Bronx and to take that into consideration in discharging his official duties.

Now, in view of this short-memoried human characteristic, it ought to be recalled how Tammany domination arose and how easily it can be upset. This does not imply any up-state hostility to the down-state Democracy, for there should not be any. It implies only an evening of the scales so that the up-state shall cease to be merely the tail of the dog and take the part it is entitled to. Until the rise of Richard Croker, then, the up-state and down-state organizations were both healthy and pretty evenly balanced. No Tammany boss dreamed of becoming state leader. In recent times David B. Hill of Elmira, a Democratic governor, built so strong an up-state organization that it was in control. New York City, or Tammany as it is now called, was so strong that Hill had to reckon with it, and in conventions and legislatures there were concessions made on both sides, but David B. Hill was the general of the political army and the Tammany boss was a colonel.

On one occasion, in 1879, the Tammany boss, John Kelly, defeated by the up-staters in convention, bolted and ran for governor himself, and the Republican was elected. But that was before the rise of Hill in 1885. Among the many incalculable effects of Bryan's long Democratic supremacy was the retirement of Hill; and when he took his hand off the lever the up-state machine collapsed. Croker and his successor Murphy, both strong men, seized the state leadership; and only because of this has it become unquestioned that the New York state Democracy is another name for Tammany. Roosevelt has built another up-state organization, and the up-state Democrats have shown that under capable leadership they are as able to count for something as in the days of Hill and Frederick Cook and Daniel Manning. They are not, as they have long appeared, ninnies; they wanted a leader, and they have got one, a leader who happens also to be the leader of the party in New York City.

WEEK BY WEEK

AS WE confidently supposed would be the case, and so have stated more than once in these pages recently, the leaders of the Catholic Church in the United States, the bishops, at their meeting in Washington on November 10, 11 and 12, have again called public attention to the fundamental problems underlying the present period of unemployment and economic crisis, and have redirected the conscience of the nation to the studies of these problems in the light of Christian principles of charity and justice. The Administrative Committee of the National Catholic Welfare Conference issued a special statement preliminary to the general meeting of the bishops at the Catholic University, in which it was stated that one of the first matters to which the Administrative Committee had given its attention was the unemployment throughout the country. It urged the application in every field of business and civic life of the principles set forth in the "Rerum Novarum" of Leo XIII, the Bishops' Reconstruction Program, and the Joint Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of the United States issued in 1919. It asked all departments of the Welfare Conference, including its thousands of affiliated lay organizations of men and women, to take an active and immediate interest in seeking to relieve and improve the condition of the unemployed; to cooperate with President Hoover's national committee on unemployment, and with local official bodies working for a betterment of this situation, which grows all the more lamentable as winter approaches. The Administrative Committee stated what of course was a matter of general knowledge, namely, that every bishop in the United States, through the agencies at his command, was doing his utmost to relieve the condition of the unemployed.

Justice and Charity

THE IMMEDIATE relief of distress is the first of all the duties of charity. To that task the Catholic Church throughout the country will continue to address itself unremittingly. Every parish priest in the country, with all his assistants, every convent and monastery in the land, are units in a vast first-aid-to-the-hungry organization which functions all the time, but which at the present must do heroic work. Nor can that work be relaxed until the emergency has been mastered. But our leaders know, as their statement proclaims, that underlying all such emergencies are those fundamental social strains which have produced the present crisis and will produce even greater ones in the future if left uncorrected. Hence their insistence upon a further study and application of the social philosophy of Christianity. In line with this policy is the announced coöperation by the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference with the Social Service Commission of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and the

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Social Justice Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, which three organizations will meet in conference in Washington in January, to deal with "permanent preventives of unemployment" intended "to focus the conscience of the nation" upon this problem. We hope soon to publish an authoritative article reviewing the progress of the Catholic social program, as laid down by the bishops in 1919.

IF NEW YORK gives Governor Roosevelt to the nation as at least a prospective President in 1932, we think that one of the most distinguishing factors in his record will be his familiarity with the highest forms of social legislation. In this field, New York has an enviable record, a great deal of the credit for which, it is of course known, must be given to former Governor Smith. It is no diminution of Governor Roosevelt's record to give this credit to his predecessor, because Mr. Roosevelt so enthusiastically endorsed the work of Mr. Smith, and is himself a man of such obviously generous and humanitarian impulses, that he is altogether in the spirit of the tradition in his own right. It is notable that in this particular field, in the régime of both governors, has figured a woman who represents one of the best types that the emergence of women into politics has produced: Miss Frances Perkins, Industrial Commissioner for the State of New York. We believe that it is especially notable that a woman should occupy this position in the commonwealth that by more than a million employs more wage-earners than any other state in the union and produces over nine billion dollars worth of products a year, which is approximately two billion dollars more than any other state.

A Political Woman

THE STEPS of her emergence are interesting, as they present a picture of a "career" woman in American politics. The records of her positions of trust go back to 1910, when she was executive secretary of the Consumers' League of New York. This position brought her into such favorable prominence, that she was delegated by the city of New York in 1911 to an investigation of cellar bakeries. The following year, she was executive secretary of the Committee on Industrial Safety, a private enterprise, from which she graduated to the State Factory Investigating Commission. In 1919 Governor Smith appointed her to the State Industrial Commission, and when this was reorganized to the State Industrial Board with quasi-executive and judicial functions in the enforcement of industrial legislation and in labor disputes, he appointed her to the board. In 1926 Governor Smith appointed her chairman of the board. And in 1929 Governor Roosevelt appointed her to her present position of Industrial Commissioner. In all she has undoubtedly been an expression of that particular benefit that it was the ideal of American womanhood to bring into politics.

BROADLY speaking, the world was probably never in a more contrite state of mind. Earnest desire for improvement is by no means confined to the economic realm, though it is doubtless most discernible there. To the spectator much that is being done in the name of rationalization must doubtless seem peculiar. Thus in Berlin hosts of placards announce regularly that "astrological morality"—an ethic dictated by what the stars have to tell—will save the world. From southeastern Europe comes the notion that regular draughts of mineral water will not merely improve temperaments and digestions but also affect the trends of markets and politics. More serious probably are the analyses to which every form of industrial activity is being subjected. The Continent in particular is seething with debates about the tariff, cartel management, wage and price adjustment, agrarian development. Sometimes the discussion comes round to tentative conclusions rich with promise and opportunity. Thus the plight of agriculture in Rumania, Hungary and Jugoslavia virtually forced the statesmen of these normally hostile countries to meet in conference some time ago. The move was followed by another in which Poland took the initiative. More recently the decisions thereby arrived at were taken to Geneva for consideration. In greater and lesser ways the same resolution to find a stepping-stone to higher things in communal action is stressed again and again. Even in the realm of religion—but that is another matter entirely.

We Aim to Improve

WITHOUT intention of intruding ourselves into the controversy between the Anglo-Catholic and the Protestant elements of the Protestant Episcopal Church, brought to something of a crisis by the manifesto of the thirteen Episcopalian clergymen of New York confuting the pro-Catholic position of their own bishop, the Right Reverend William T. Manning, we may be permitted to remark that the affair is far more than merely local in character, and is indicative of an almost worldwide reëxamination of the fundamental principles of several great Protestant bodies. The disturbance caused in England by the opposition of the Anglo-Catholics to the resolution of the Anglican bishops favoring birth control serves to emphasize a problem of which that particular controversy is merely one of many elements. As Dr. Funder, one of the best informed European correspondents of the news service of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, recently pointed out, a vigorous and growing pro-Catholic movement is evident among the Lutherans in Germany.

From Peter's Rock

QUITE apart from the intricate historical and doctrinal issues involved in this struggle, as they affect members of these communions, and which may well be left to them to deal with, we are inclined to share the

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view of Mr. Evelyn Waugh, the English novelist, who recently joined the stream of English converts to the Catholic Church, in thinking that it is the lack of coherence and consistency in many of the Protestant bodies that is causing the upheavals within them. "It seems to me," writes Mr. Waugh, "a necessary sign of completeness and vitality in a religious body that its teaching shall be coherent and consistent. If its own mind is not made up, it can hardly hope to withstand disorder from outside. In the Anglican Church today matters of supreme importance in faith and morals are still discussed indecisively, while the holders of high office are able to make assertions which do violence to the deepest feelings of many of their people."

THE DEBATE on the merits and demerits of the talkies has been conducted solely on artistic grounds.

Children in the Talkies

It seems to us that another consideration is growing so rapidly that it shoulders aside the question of whether the new films are to be praised for enlarging the scope of the screen's possibilities, or blamed for destroying its characteristic pantomimic technique. That is the question of the talkie's effect on the moral and intellectual development of child actors. The multiplied appeal which the new medium makes possible has greatly increased their number and—what is the real crux of the danger—has led producers and directors to widen their repertoire. The antics of the gamins who grimaced on the silent screen of old at least were intended to be childish, however much their conception of childishness may have afflicted us. The restricted medium kept them, theoretically, within their own category, and the chief moral harm to be dreaded was vanity. The talkies are another story altogether. The appeal of childish voices singing sophisticated songs, and of childish bodies strutting and contorting in the jungle dances which are their invariable accompaniment, has been discovered by certain forward-looking producers. The result is pretty appalling.

THE key word in the above is "appeal." One of our most earnest beliefs is and has been that the great masses of the public are sound at heart, and absolutely to be trusted in the long run. In the short run they are unhappily liable to unpredictable and disastrous lapses. That is what keeps the tripe magazines and the obscene shows going. It is a severe strain on the democratic sentiment to sit through one of the revues we have been describing, and take in the indubitable fact that mothers and fathers all around one in the darkness are getting a hearty fillip out of hearing a four-year-old master of ceremonies, the curves of babyhood still in his features, introduce other children imitators of Follies and Scandals specialties, in a song abounding in innuendoes which he confides to the audience, "I'm too young to know the meaning of." However, we do not abandon our principles. As in the case of all matters of the common weal, from prohibition to censorship, our hope is still in the public. We believe that the moral anaesthesia (we do not speak of the atrocious taste) that makes such spectacles profitable as entertainment, will lift. Corporate decency and common sense are bound in time to assert themselves. An understanding is bound to grow that, in the exploitation of innocence to underline a sophistication often actually corrupt, innocence must almost inevitably be impaired. It is in the hope of hastening the growth of that understanding that we write these words.

A STEREOTYPED uniformity of the American scene is often bemoaned both by aesthetes and week-end motorists. Foreign commentators have frequently commented on the same thing in our culture. We have ourselves felt this way at times as we observed that the signboards and hot-dog stands between which we passed in the far South were identical with the ones bordering our Northern lanes. It is always encouraging therefore to hear of any fostering of racy local traditions. Notable work of this sort is being done by the Vermont Committee on Traditions and Ideals. The Green Mountain state, gifted with beautiful scenery, was further blessed with the charm of the dwellings and communities of its early settlers. The little white-painted farm houses, with clustering outbuildings, on a green hillside usually protected from the north wind by a patch of woods which made a perfect setting, had a special charm and loveliness that is comparable for beauty with anything of a similar kind in the world. The simple yet richly human life that went on here also had its special charm.

American Traditions

THE COMMITTEE that is seeking to collect and preserve these things in history, biography, folklore, songs and poetry, has a distinguished personnel, among whom are: Professor Arthur Wallace Peach, poet and critic; Dorothy Canfield Fisher, novelist and essayist; Sarah Cleghorn, poet; Walter H. Crockett, historian; Professor Frederick Tupper, head of the English Department at the University of Vermont; Walter J. Coates, poet and editor of *Driftwood from the North Hills,* a bi-monthly magazine of prose and verse; Zephine Humphrey Fahnestock, author; and Father O'Shannon, Catholic priest. The purpose of this group undoubtedly has many counterparts in other sections where people love the places where they live. We cannot refrain from commending it, in having it incidentally brought to our attention by a request for permission to include in a book of Vermont poetry a poem which appeared in our columns. Those of us who were victims of the great urban trek in recent years, and so have only a transient feeling in the places where we are, and whose hearthsides are steam radiators in city apartments, can be grateful that there are some who are carrying on the old traditions, to which some day we may be priviliged to return.

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MR. WILLIAM STETSON MERRILL, formerly of the Newberry and now of the John Crerar Library in Chicago, comments interestingly on our reference to the Boston censorship that prevented the publication in the sixteenth century of Thomas à Kempis's "Imitacons of Christ" (sic) because it had been "written by a popish minister" and "conteyned some things that are less safe to be infused among the people of this place." The vigilance of the good Puritan fathers does not seem to have been any more successful in the exclusion of objectionable publications from the colony than that of the modern prohibitionists with regard to liquor. A notable instance of the failure of their efforts at exclusion of undesirable books is demonstrated by the presence in the library of the American Antiquarian Society of Worcester, Massachusetts, of a copy of "The Letters of Heloise and Abelard" to which "is prefixed a particular account of their lives, amours and misfortunes." This volume was printed in Philadelphia in 1775, but somehow secured an entrance into New England in spite of censorship. There is even a tradition that several other copies of this work found their way into Massachusetts and proved to have rather special attraction for the Puritans of the time, partly because of the very human interest in the intrigue, but also very probably because the Philadelphia publication furnished fuel for the flame of intolerance against the Catholic Church, since a priest was one of the actors in the drama. Censorship always has many more angles than appear on the surface.

Puritan Censorship

ONE OF the curiosities of the recent election was the accidental election of a Catholic priest, the Reverend Napoleon J. Gilbert, pastor of the Holy Rosary Church of Hooksett, New Hampshire, as a representative to the General Court. It appears that Father Gilbert was in no sense a candidate, but his name was written in on the Democratic primary ticket to such an effect that the count of the votes found him with a right to take office by a substantial majority. If he declines to accept the responsibility—as he may do—a special election will be necessary. There is some little historical irony in the incident, inasmuch as New Hampshire was the last of the states made up of the original thirteen colonies to repeal laws on its statute book forbidding Catholics to hold political office. It was not until 1877, nearly one hundred years after the adoption of the federal constitution, that the provision disqualifying Catholics from holding office was removed from New Hampshire's constitution. It would have been an interesting test of the present condition of public opinion in that state if Father Gilbert had really been running for office. Probably he would have been elected anyhow, for the same tides of feeling that swept the nation in 1928 were happily not in evidence in 1930.

Time's Irony

PRESBYTERIANISM AND SEX

NO MORE startling sign of the revolutionary movement now agitating the Protestant churches and so deeply affecting Christian morals has been observed, since the Church of England favored birth control at the recent Lambeth Conference, than the amazing book issued under the auspices of the Presbyterian General Assembly's Commission on Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage, which contains the report made by that commission. It contains much else than the report; in fact, the other contents of the volume go far to explain the amazement we have registered. Without attempting at this time any detailed analysis or criticism of the contents of this volume, it will suffice to call attention to a few of the many features which warrant us, we believe, in considering it as a portent—perhaps even a definite proof—of the disruptive confusion of mind which is so unfortunately afflicting Protestant Christianity as it attempts to deal with matters of sexual morality.

The commission issuing the book acts under the authorization of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The main body of the report of this commission forms one of the chapters of the volume. Apparently the publication of this book is as fully warranted by the authority of the Presbyterian Church as the report of the commission itself. And it is this fact which principally causes our amazement.

It is apparently a confession of ignorance on our part, but we had always supposed the Presbyterians to be the possessors of a thoroughly consistent and, from their point of view, orthodox Christian theology, doctrine and discipline. We had supposed also that "the Presbyterian Churches exalt the Scriptures above the Church and urge that Christian men and Christian assemblies should wait upon God and listen for the voice of His spirit speaking infallibly in His Word." To find, then, in a book entitled, "Twenty-four Views of Marriage," issued under such auspices, the most subversive and destructive opinions of such declared and determined opponents of orthodox Christian morals as Bertrand Russell, Judge Lindsey and Count Keyserling, together with the theories of various exceedingly radical writers and psychoanalysts, more than justifies our astonishment. For the commission itself to acquaint itself with and study such utterances, was part of its duty—but to spread them before the world as worthy of anything save condemnation is the thing that astounds us.

Passing from the contents list to the introduction, our astonishment reaches well-nigh to stupefaction when we read such statements as the following: "There is a unanimous agreement both inside and outside of the Church on one point. Christianity has failed to reproduce in the present generation the Christian marriage ideal"; and, "the result of this neglect on the part of the Church in inculcating in the present genera-

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tion the divine principles that sanctify marriage and educate it in regard to the spiritual qualities necessary for a successful Christian home is obvious. It has culminated in a sex stampede and a practical acceptance of a pagan standard of life and living on a hitherto unprecedented scale"; and, "the time has come for the Church to become vocal on the subject of marriage."

Further on in the book it is also stated that as there is "a primary necessity among Christian leaders [of] a more intelligent understanding of the current minds, both of the popular masses and of special sociological students on what really constitutes marriage and the proper conditions and limitations which should be imposed on the privilege of divorce, the Commission of the Presbyterian Church has sought to meet that need by making available the best pronouncements on this subject by leading religious, moral, social, psychological, biological and judicial students."

As the word" Church" is used not only in the introduction but in many places in the various chapters in the broad sense of organized Christianity, and not specifically as meaning the Presbyterian Church in the United States, we can only ask in utter bewilderment, without any expectation of receiving an adequate answer: "But what about the Catholic Church?" The editors of the book cannot have been wholly ignorant of the fact that there is such a thing as the Catholic Church, for they refer to it as follows: "When once this present generation discovers that the Christian marriage ideal is based on demonstrable scientific data and not upon the misanthropy of Saint Paul or the monasticism of Catholicism, as some of the critics of marriage would have us believe, much of the criticism now disturbing the institution of marriage will die of its own volition." And further on in the book, there is a description of this horrendous monasticism of Catholicism, contributed by no less an authority than Bertrand Russell!

Apparently, then, if we are to judge both by the explicit statement of the introduction concerning the evil effects of Catholic monasticism, and the implicit condemnation of Catholic morality furnished by the republication of Bertrand Russell's ludicrous travesty of the subject, the Presbyterian Church in the United States officially condemns the concepts and practice of those moral principles having to do with sex which are maintained by the Catholic Church. We are reminded again of the words of an English Protestant clergyman, the Reverend J. M. Lloyd Thomas, from whom we quoted recently in discussing the resolution favoring birth control passed by the majority of the bishops of the Church of England. Writing in the *Hibbert Journal,* Mr. Thomas said that the Catholic Church, "whatever its past or present laxities of practice, is seen to be the one uncompromising corporate witness to that moral code of Christianity which preserves Western civilization from final collapse. It presents the last loyalty of the human race to its own highest moral standards. It is the iron bulwark of Christianity against the overwhelming invasion of the corrupting neo-paganism of our times. Anglican and Free Church leaders may also be found who are rock-firm for the Christian ethic, but they can commit no one except themselves. There is no authoritative moral theology which can tell us what is the final judgment of Anglicans and Free Churchmen on questions such as marriage, divorce, birth control, companionate marriage, divorce, euthanasia, suicide. Only Rome speaks with one voice on such themes, and these are the issues of life and death, of the survival or decline of the West. On these themes no one, least of all our belauded 'frank' and 'honest,' over-sexed and promiscuously-minded modern youth can keep an open mind for a single hour without risk of ruin. This is the supreme attraction of Rome—its moral challenge to a high temperance, chastity and self-control. For this the descendants of the Ironsides and the Anglican inheritors of British Catholicism should be outspokenly thankful."

Every device has been employed by the Presbyterian General Assembly's Commission to make its views popular and of wide effect. While the reports of commissions, particularly on such gravely important themes as are dealt with by this commission, ordinarily are presented solely to the consideration of sincere students, this book obviously is meant for the multitude. The dust-jacket contains a blurb listing the group of writers, among whom naturally those conspicuous for their attacks on Christian morality will leap to the eye of the reader. "All shades of opinion and advice are offered," says the blurb, "Judge Lindsey argues for companionate marriage and Dr. Collins against it. Christian doctrine and psychoanalysis are both ably represented. *On the whole the bias seems in favor of marriage, continence, and the Christian virtues, but there is much dissent and qualifications."* (The italics are ours.) There are indeed!

To say that Christian doctrine is ably represented in a volume from which the Christian doctrine which the Catholic Church has maintained for 2,000 years and which she still maintains among by far the most numerous body of Christians in the world, is unrepresented save by Bertrand Russell's ludicrous parody of it, may strike us as similar to the famous presentation of "Hamlet" with the part of the Prince of Denmark omitted; but we have already registered our opinion that this exclusion of the voice of the Church is not an oversight or an accident, but can only be a deliberate declaration of war upon orthodox Christian doctrine, and a surrender to the very paganism which the commission ostensibly declares that it wishes to oppose. It is as if the Presbyterian Church in the United States had submitted itself to psychoanalysis, and then had given the results of the diagnosis to the world. We can only hope that the Presbyterian Church as a body, however, has been led astray and utterly misrepresented by its commission.

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THE REVOLUTION IN BRAZIL

By XAVIER DE MATTOS

THE AVERAGE reader whose attention has lately been drawn by the clamoring headlines of our daily papers in regard to the recent political turmoil in Brazil, will wonder what can be the meaning of it all. If he is even slightly acquainted with the past of Brazil he will perceive at once that it must have some real meaning; he will discard the suggestion that it may be nothing more than a meaningless repetition of endemic revolutionary outbursts by ambitious *caudillos* in a contest for personal domination, frequent in some of our less progressive Latin neighbors.

The history of Brazil will not admit such an explanation. That country has been traditionally one of the most pacifist and conservative in the world. She managed to wade without bloodshed through the crucial ordeals which cost the United States the Revolutionary and the Civil Wars and France the terrors of the French Revolution. Once in possession of a republican régime, Brazil enjoyed an enduring political stability and up to now, had the distinction of being the only Latin-American country whose political administrations have peacefully succeeded each other without the aid or imposition of the military arm. Now for the first time a legally constituted administration was forced to resign under the pressure of a revolution which, were it not for its brief duration of twenty-one days, might well be termed a civil war.

The underlying factor of this and similar revolutionary outbursts in the more progressive South American republics is the emerging democratic consciousness of the masses. They are clamoring for a recognition of their political rights and demanding freedom to exercise them; as this is denied them, they are assuming a challenging attitude and asserting themselves aggressively through armed revolutions. Conscious of their growing strength, they are trying to oust the political clans that, since the beginning, have monopolized statecraft and enriched themselves with the wealth and privileges accruing from their position, to the detriment of the wider national interests. In Brazil this new democratic spirit made its debut during the World War, stimulated no doubt by the worldwide conflagration abroad, and a sudden and therefore all the more alarming realization of unpreparedness at home. This new spirit, which at first manifested itself in the industrial centers of the land, has grown and expanded so as to be felt today even in the most remote villages of the Brazilian hinterland. In view of this, it becomes impossible to speak of the last month's upheaval as a phenomenon by itself; in reality it is merely the latest phase of a slow but irresistible social transformation.

The sham democracy which, until very recently, has so ingloriously steered Latin-America to her vaguely apprehended destinies, has fortunately been of short duration in Brazil. In a previous article in this review the writer had the opportunity of referring to the happy-go-lucky frame of mind developed by Brazilian politics after the downfall of the paternalistic government of Pedro II in 1889. The generation of politicians who governed the land from that date up to the eve of the World War was obsessed by a strange political ideology, which the Brazilian of today finds it hard to understand and still harder to justify. Througout that period the presidential platforms and electoral speeches were monotonously vague and void of any definite statement of practical policies to be followed or constructive programs to be carried out. This situation reflected itself even more glaringly in the drowsy and inefficient work of the successive administrations; all they did was to attend grudgingly to the most primary requisites of public health and national welfare. But, in spite of this administrative inertia, the country was rapidly growing; the index of its population doubled itself in a score of years and the statistical curve of the nation's activity in every field of human endeavor kept pace with it. Brazil was undergoing a great social transformation, which the political clans were unfortunately slow in recognizing.

During the World War the national industries began to develop and to take root in the soil. With them there emerged a vigorous middle class which represents the new Brazilian type, composed of the country's old Portugese stock and the new-born generation whose ancestors came from Italy, Germany and the Slavic countries. The product of this complex amalgamation is revealing traits hitherto unknown in Brazil; it is energetic, impatient and active, not so romantic but more business-minded, full of enterprising genius and ambition. These new Brazilians abhor the void of abstract ideologies and are not susceptible to the poetic sentimentalism which formerly prevailed in the country. Instead, their outlook on life is characterized by a strong practical idealism and a keen appreciation of economic values. They have learned to prize economic prosperity as a concrete basis for the upbuilding of the future greatness of their country, a greatness warranted, they realize, by its enormous potential wealth.

To this end, political order and administrative honesty as well as efficiency are imperative; then, too, a more centralized government and uniform legislation are paramount in preserving the political unity of their tropical colossus and promoting the expansion of their national trade. For the young Brazil of today, the extreme liberalism of the Republican Magna Carta of February 24, 1891, in regard to "state rights" is nothing short of a dangerous anachronism. This new trend toward a stronger federal government already had attained an organized expression in 1925 with the

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unprecedented formation of national parties; those are obliterating in the national Congress the artificial divisions of the representative bodies according to states, which was the formerly prevailing system. It shows that national views are taking precedence over the narrower interests of the particular states.

The measures taken by President Washington Luis to put an end, through federal intervention, to the intolerable feud of political clans within the little northern state of Parahiba, was certainly in accordance with this new nationalist spirit. Unfortunately, it conflicted with the obsolete constitutional provisions of 1891 and was not sanctioned by the so-called party of the "Liberal Alliance," in political control over these states which became the foci of the recent revolution. This makes one fear that a final adjustment has not yet been reached by the success of this revolution; it decidedly constitutes a retrogression to the political ideology of 1891, and sooner, perhaps, than we might expect, the political party that is promoting it may have to give way before a federalist reaction. It does not yet seem as if Brazil had reached the threshold of a new era as a result of this revolution in spite of the repeated affirmations to the contrary cabled to the outside world by the successful rebels.

But we have so far studied the social background, and only one aspect, and this the less tangible, of the complex situation in which that country finds itself. Another aspect there is which greatly helps to explain the present crists. It is the worldwide economic depression, from which Brazil is just now acutely suffering.

For years the unbridled exploitation of Brazil's most remunerative agricultural export, namely coffee, forced Brazilian trade to a chronic fluctuation which directly affected the national currency and through it the whole financial life of the country. In his presidential platform of 1925, Washington Luis pledged himself to a program of financial betterment by means of a scheme of valorization of the coffee prices. This program was welcomed with applause by the country at large and immediately after his inauguration, he gave himself wholeheartedly to the task, with the honesty and efficiency which have characterized every act of his public career. The three great coffee states, Rio, São Paulo and Minas were brought into an agreement to limit their coffee exports on a quota basis under the supervision of the federal government, which thereby was able to check the trade fluctuations and maintain the national currency on a firm basis. This program was successful, and for the last four years has produced beneficial results. But when the administration was about to retire, congratulating itself on having successfully accomplished its difficult task, Brazil's coffee trade fell into a slump which greatly alarmed the nation. A diagnosis reveals that two main factors have concurred in producing it. One is the financial depression which is being felt the world over. The other is the fact that this valorization program opened the door to the competition of other coffee-producing countries of Latin America, especially Colombia. When the Brazilian valorization program was conceived this competition was negligible, their net coffee exports hardly supplying 10 percent of the world's consumption. Lately this percentage has considerably increased. It is not, however, so evident that the Brazilian dominance is thereby greatly endangered.

President Washington Luis's administration, and that which normally was to have succeeded it, pointed to the first factor as being the only cause of the recent slump; and as it is a merely temporary one, they declared themselves in favor of a faithful adherence to the valorization program. The liberal party, however, under the leadership of Getulio Vargas (the defeated candidate in the presidential elections of last March, and leader of last month's revolution) taking a more alarmist view of the situation—a view shared by not a few Brazilian financiers—advocates the repeal of this program and proposes the policy of lowering the coffee rates to the level of international competition; this, it maintains will secure the advantages of the world market and guarantee the future of the Brazilian monopoly. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not this alarmist policy is really so urgent, and whether the country will ultimately profit by it.

This is the vital issue that, together with political complications of the hour, has split the nation into two sharply opposed factions which last month came to close grips. It is practically impossible at the present moment to decide which view is the more sound and which of the two policies should be preferred, and this perplexity is generally felt throughout the nation. Under these conditions, one thing was quite evident: that the development of the revolution into a protracted civil war would certainly not improve the economic situation of the land, to say the very least. It was with a clear vision of this fact that, amid the general perplexity and confusion, the Cardinal Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro raised his voice in the name of God and the country, persuading the contending factions to submit to a truce while there was yet time. His voice was echoed by millions upon whom the crushing burden of the civil war would ultimately fall.

The fatal clash was imminent, and to prevent it, a heroic sacrifice was urgently needed. One of the factions had to give way. As the alarmist rebels refused to submit, the constitutional government was asked to resign. In any event President Luis's term of office was to expire within three weeks, on the coming November 15. His submission to this demand of his resignation is all the more heroic as such an act, in the eyes of the world and in its practical consequences, is equivalent to a defeat, at least temporary, of all he represented in the political world. But in reality, he thus won for his name the highest title of civic heroism with which he crowned his administration: an administration which will pass into the annals of Brazil's history as one of the most honest, enlightened and efficient that country ever possessed.

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IRISH CENSORS AND ENGLISH PAPERS

By DENIS GWYNN

AN EXPERIMENT of great interest in itself, and of much wider consequence than could be expected, was made last summer with the passing of the Irish Free State's Censorship of Publications Act. Several minor prosecutions in regard to periodicals have already taken place; and although there has been difficulty and delay in constituting the board of unpaid censors who will have to perform the onerous duties required by the act, the mere existence of the new law has already had a marked effect in restricting reports of legal and other cases of an indecent nature.

The act has also had repercussions upon the English press for special reasons, which its authors most probably never anticipated. The present situation, arising from the peculiar conditions of the modern newspaper world in England, suggests what a powerful indirect influence may be exerted across the Irish Sea by the enforcement of an intelligent and healthy censorship in Ireland.

There is an immense difference between the conditions of newspaper production in Ireland and in England. In both countries the conditions are probably very different again from those which are usual in the United States. Questions of geography and population, as well as economic conditions, have a decisive bearing on the matter, and in these various respects England and Ireland present a complete contrast to each other.

In the Irish Free State (which is all Ireland except the northeastern counties that center around Belfast) there are just under three million people, of whom more than half a million live in and around Dublin. The whole center of the country is very sparsely populated, for the wide central plain consists partly of uninhabitable bogland and partly of rich pasture land where grazing is more profitable than tillage. Except for the ports of Cork, Limerick and Waterford, there are no towns of any considerable size outside the Dublin area; and, generally speaking, nearly half the Irish population live on small farms around the western seaboard.

To obtain any large circulation for a daily newspaper under such conditions involves obvious difficulties. In the primitive economic conditions that prevail all through the west, there is no rapid transport available for distributing newspapers, and there is not even a public who have acquired the habit of reading newspapers from day to day. The maximum possible circulation for a daily newspaper in Ireland is consequently small; the cost of distributing newspapers to the western side of the depopulated midlands is high; and the possible revenue from advertisements in a poor country is very restricted.

Consequently, no newspaper that does not command great financial resources or that cannot produce its paper at a very low cost per copy printed, will find it worth while to incur the heavy expense of organizing a vigorous expansion of its circulation in the Irish Free State. It happens, however, that there are in London at least four daily newspapers which command such resources and are in constant competition with each other to attain new records in circulation figures. Each of them in fact regards the Irish public as one of the few unexploited possibilities that can still be developed.

In England itself the conditions are completely different. There, nearly fifty million people are concentrated in a country not much larger than Ireland; they are for the most part highly urbanized, and they are united by a highly developed transport system. In London and the adjacent counties, within a radius of fifty miles from Fleet Street, there are some fifteen million people; and another concentration of population of almost equal size inhabits the great industrial belt of country across the north.

In order to exploit, and develop to the utmost, the demand for newspapers in these very exceptional conditions, the big London dailies now have their papers printed and distributed simultaneously from two centers—one in Fleet Street, London, and the other in Manchester or Leeds or some other convenient city of the north. By such means they have each attained a circulation of at least a million copies per day. The *Daily Mail* still maintains its lead, with a net sale of just under the two million mark. The *Daily Express* has continued to climb up, month after month, until it has reached over a million and three-quarters; while the *Daily News* and the *Daily Chronicle* follow close behind.

So long as this intense competition between the English newspapers lasts, no one of the Big Four dailies can afford to allow its rival to develop any new field without following hot upon its heels. The vast revenue from advertisements (which makes such expansion possible) depends directly upon the net sales figures that are guaranteed by the auditor's report; and a failure to maintain the existing sales involves loss of prestige and real danger of being driven out of the race. Consequently, every conceivable opening for pushing each daily newspaper is exploited to the full; but where such a deluge of newsprint exists already, new readers can be won only by offering costly bribes in the form of free insurance or some other ingenious scheme.

The only alternative is to seek new readers in districts where newspapers have not yet penetrated; and for that purpose Ireland nowadays presents almost

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the only promising ground. Every corner of England and the lowlands of Scotland has been scoured already by the rival distributors, delivering their papers by rail or road or even by special air services. So long as the present fierce competition continues, it may become worth while for a powerful newspaper trust to spend even sixpence per copy, for a time, in distributing a penny newspaper in certain districts, if such methods can bring a really appreciable addition to the total sale.

Already special Irish editions of the English dailies are printed at the northern publishing offices. And in the determination to capture that extra 100,000 of net sales, almost any English daily paper may attempt to deliver its Irish edition in remote parts of Ireland every morning, even at an hour earlier than the genuinely Irish daily paper, printed in Dublin, can hope to reach its readers. It is by such means that some of the English daily newspapers have actually succeeded in selling more papers than the really Irish newspapers —so that the *Daily Mail,* even when it was most ferociously anti-Irish in its politics, had a larger net sale in Ireland than had any Irish newspaper. To achieve that position, however, the English newspapers have had to make an immensely costly effort.

To retain it, they may yet have to face unexpected sacrifices. And the Irish Censorship Act does in fact confront them with a situation which may even require a wide revision of policy in certain matters. The act is aimed directly at the suppression of indecent reports of a sexual nature, and particularly and explicitly at the prohibition of birth control propaganda. Once the act has become fully operative, therefore, that will mean inevitably that any English newspaper which, for instance, publishes a series of articles discussing the pros and cons of birth control will risk having its Irish circulation banned.

The same risk will apply still more to the popular Sunday newspapers, which are in no less fierce competition and attain even larger circulation totals. To deal drastically with some of these Sunday newspapers was in fact the reason for enlarging the scope of the act, to prohibit newspapers which "devote excessive space to reports of sensational crime." One notorious Sunday paper, which has a net sale of some three million copies a week, was alluded to repeatedly in the Irish debates on the bill; and a fairly general agreement among all parties was apparent that, if the act did no more than prevent the import of that one paper, it would have justified its existence. That particular newspaper is composed so overwhelmingly of crime stories that its character could scarcely be modified sufficiently to meet the requirements of the Irish censorship. But other popular Sunday papers in England depend less on their crime reports. No one of them can risk losing part of its circulation; and the effect of the Irish Censorship Act, in curbing the character of crime reports in them all, is evident already since the act became law.

The psychology of newspaper proprietors may, of course, develop in different directions and break away from the present obsessions. But for the time being it may be said truly enough, that most proprietors are more concerned with retaining the extra 100,000 readers who have been secured with great exertions, than in stimulating the interest of the faithful following, whose loyalty has been insured by the bribery of insurance coupons and holiday competitions. So long, therefore, as the present rivalry is the dominating factor in the policy of each of the big English newspapers, the Irish censorship is likely to have a really far-reaching effect. For the present, the fear of losing their Irish circulation will affect their whole policy; and there is certainly no present likelihood that an agreement will be reached among them to defy the Irish censorship with a united front.

Should such a united defiance arise, the English papers concerned will presumably cease to circulate in the Irish Free State. And since the Censorship Act was not a government measure, but a result of an unanimous report of a thoroughly representative commission of inquiry (which included recognized spokesmen of every religious denomination), it may be doubted whether the prohibition of English newspapers for such reasons would be seriously resented. It would certainly not be regretted by the Irish daily newspapers, which are now confronted with the dumping of millions of copies of English papers, produced and distributed at a marginal cost far below what can ever be possible in Ireland alone.

That such a prohibition should take place, however, seems quite remote. Much more likely is it that the English newspaper editors will find it necessary to place a stricter supervision upon their treatment of indecent subects; and that by such means the tone of the whole English press will unconsciously be raised— as an indirect result of an act of the Irish Parliament which the English highbrows have treated with pitiful disdain and contempt.

Libation

All garnered is the golden maize;
The bins are full, the fruitage stored.
Now toil comes homing through the haze,
And now the lessee lifts in praise
A chalice to his Overlord.

O not alone for the rich yields,
And not alone for the fair ranks
Of bundled sheaves upon the fields,
And not alone for strength that shields
His harvest, glows the steward's thanks!

His grace is said for the benign
Unhidden soul in sun and shade;
For unsought God who has His sign
On every star and cloud and vine;
For beauty's endless ambuscade.

CLIFFORD J. LAUBE.

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THE NON-CATHOLIC CATHOLIC

By HARVEY WICKHAM

As we have previously announced, Mr. Wickham died suddenly in Rome on November 3. This article—an open letter to Mr. Donald Powell—had just been received, and is evidence of his vigor right up to his sudden end. We believe he would still have approved its publication, and in affectionate remembrance we wish to do him every honor. It was in THE COMMONWEAL *that Harvey Wickham published the essays and articles which led him on to the writing of that brilliant trilogy of books, "The Misbehaviorists," "The Impuritans" and "The Unrealists."—The Editors.*

MY DEAR Mr. Powell: Your contribution to THE COMMONWEAL of September 3 shows that even you are not quite willing to drop our little Pow-wow-ell—as Mr. McGuire would doubtless expect me to call it—on the subject of neo-paganism. You have, you say, only a mild interest in what I think about Misbehaviorists, Impuritans, or Unrealists, but "a deep interest in what Mr. Harvey Wickham thinks about Mr. Harvey Wickham." That is, you would like to create a diversion from neo-paganism to neo-autobiography.

How this can be so passes my understanding; but I'll tell you what Harvey Wickham thinks of Harvey Wickham. He doesn't think much of him. The fellow has his faults, and knows it, or anyway knows some of them. He has no intention, however, of putting this special knowledge upon the air, of unlocking his heart with a sonnet key, or of publicly butchering his reticence to make a Roman's holiday.

You say it is evident that he has a confession to make to someone, but this is merely saying that he is a human being—for which many thanks. Even his humanity has been denied by some authorities, who have compared him to various animals, insects and vegetables, and to all minerals save gold.

Mr. Axton Clark, for instance, alleges in the New York *Times Book Review* of June 22 that "Mr. Wickham . . . suggests a Pomeranian triumphantly yapping at a group of Great Danes," the Danes being those very Unrealist philosophers whom you and Mr. McGuire are out to encourage; and hints further that the accused is "a lost lamb bleating on the mountains." To which Mr. McGuire (Mr. Harry McGuire, whose letter follows yours in the same issue of THE COMMONWEAL) adds the epithets "smart-aleck," and "a superior sort of universal Catholic non-Catholic non-Protestant non-pagan" posing as a "sage."

Mr. McGuire expands the indictment further with the charge of "word-juggling," the true bill which he reports from the grand jury reading: "Smart-alecks outside the Church (page Mr. Wickham), whose only claim on the readers of THE COMMONWEAL is that they too [the alecks] despise obvious stupidities like prohibition and politico-religious bigotry, and that they practise word-juggling in the manner (but far from the spirit) of Mr. Chesterton." A critic writing in *Plain Talk* for June likewise couples the names of these two defendants, claiming that the "garbage" of the one is "about as effective" as the "garbage" of the other.

Now anybody should, I think, feel proud to be associated with Mr. Chesterton in any way. No one could admire both the man and his "garbage" more than Mr. Wickham does. "To juggle," my dictionary affirms, is "to cheat by artifice," a juggle is "a trick" or "an imposture." I must confess that I have never caught this defendant at that. And fearing *peine forte et dure* if he here stands mute, my client, may it please your honor, offers a plea of not guilty, and appeals to the record, well aware that anything he says, and much that he does not say, may be used against him. And though I have not been retained as counsel for Mr. Chesterton, I would say that the same goes for him, especially since Prosecutor McGuire admits that in G. K.'s case the word-juggling crime is a virtue because though committed in a similar "manner," it is in a different "spirit."

Conceivably the Chesterton style—so inimitable both in its "spirit" and "manner," and in those paradoxes where half-truths are suddenly made to reveal the whole intent—might better be described as felicitous rather than either garbaceous or prestidigitarian. And this, I am confident, is what Mr. McGuire, who seems to have permitted words to juggle him, really means so far as Mr. Chesterton is concerned. Of course anybody who has a vocabulary of more than 250 words, and writes in English (popularly known as journalese) instead of Greek, is nowadays automatically tagged as an imitator either of Mr. Chesterton or of Mr. Mencken, though as a matter of fact it was the elder Dana and Stephen Crane who saved the language from complete annihilation at the hands of the sophomores of "good taste."

To return to you, Mr. Powell, let me say again that the life story of the accused, though in preparation, is not yet ready for the press, and will—when and if published—be found to contain the author's opinions upon all other subjects rather than self. You are doomed to disappointment if you are looking for spectacular crimes. The police of no country are out after him, so far as I have been informed. He realizes the increased literary value and story-interest which would come from his committing a murder or two (or even a "moderate murder" in the manner of Mr. Chesterton's Faultless Felons), and there is still time to give self-expression to that natural desire to strangle which the sight of certain necks (no, not yours!) inevitably provokes. But thus far he hasn't got around to it.

But what, I gather, you would really like to know

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is how a writer who does not ooze hatred of Catholicism at every pore can reconcile his conscience with his remaining outside of the Church. Perhaps he doesn't reconcile it. Who knows? Were you hoping that he would show you an easy way *out* of the Church? God forbid! What he really does do is to gasp with amazement when he learns from Mr. McGuire's article that you, the redoubtable champion of neo-paganism and lover of the breasts of the nymphs in the brake, are yourself a Catholic. He knows now how the Prodigal Son would have felt had he chanced to encounter his honored elder brother having a fling at the husks which the swine did eat. And that wonders may not cease, Mr. McGuire wishes "more power" to you.

He even finds it in a measure "gratifying," he says, "to see a Catholic like Mr. Powell defending some aspects of paganism," and hopes to see "more of a tendency to encourage broad-mindedness *in* the Church, represented by such as Mr. Powell," which evidently means broad-mindedness in churchmen toward churchmen. So it would seem that those *in* the Church should be granted a license to scatter poison, while those outside are not to be encouraged, but are to be prosecuted as bootleggers, even when they peddle an antidote—or at least an attempted analysis of the poison. What a very singular idea!

As to you, Mr. Powell, I am rather inclined to doubt the alleged mildness of your interest in this analysis—that is to say, in the opinions expressed in "The Unrealists" and its companion volumes. From such mildness how could have come the professed depth of your interest in what Harvey Wickham thinks of Harvey Wickham? Come now! Is it not a fact that you encountered certain arguments (not opinions) which you found it difficult to answer, which somewhat disturbed you, and that—to divert your mind and furnish a spectacle for the gallery—you tried to tempt the author to drag his wretched personality red-herringwise across the trail? Love me, love my dog, says the proverb. I wonder if both you and Mr. McGuire are not a little wounded because the accused refuses to love your Great Danes—those splendid animals whose bay you think all Pomeranians should respect.

But you say that the particular Pomeranian in question—though you are far too much of a sahib to have used the word—is "representative of a large group, which is Catholic in sympathy, without being Catholic," and that you "find it hard to understand the mental processes of the Catholic non-Catholic." As you must be familiar with the mental processes of the neo-pagan Catholic, one would expect you to find it child's play to understand any and all mental processes known to man.

There is, of course, no such creature as a "Catholic non-Catholic," unless you mean a Catholic who is unconscious of his Catholicism and is therefore a non-non-Catholic, or else a non-Catholic Catholic, one whose Catholicism is imperfect and limited. But I think these compounds in non are confusing, and come chiefly from applying the word Catholic to one of those several categories of secular things historically associated with the Church. Thus one may be a devotee of Catholic art, or music, or organization, or political science, or literature, or philosophy, without being a Catholic in any religious sense, or even a Christian.

Those whose religious sympathies incline them toward the Church, but do not lead them actually to submit themselves to the discipline emanating from Rome, are another matter. You would find their processes less puzzling if you ceased calling them mental. By the time a non-Catholic has become sympathetic, it is probably not to his intellect that the non applies.

Take that Pomeranian who yaps at the great beasts of monism. His mental processes are quite uncomplicated. He has merely applied, with what success it is not for me to say, the principles of Scholasticism to some of the facts—including some of the newly discovered facts—of life, and also to some of the long since moldy falsehoods of the newer philosophers. Not believing it to be patented, he made use of a system of thought which was developed by the Church. He did not pretend that it was complete without its theology, he merely was not writing about theology. And if he did venture to explain a few Catholic doctrines of a purely religious nature, it was only after consulting competent authority and solely for the benefit of those who have formed opinions without taking this precaution. But complicated mental processes are required only by those who attempt to reconcile contradictory systems of thought—Catholicism and paganism, for example. It is minds like yours and Mr. McGuire's which need to be explained.

But if you will permit me to turn aside from processes which are mental to those which are emotional, moral or spiritual, and concern the heart, the will or the soul rather than the mind, your question may be interpreted as meaning: "Why don't Protestants turn Catholic immediately after they cease protesting and from the moment they no longer take part in No-Popery riots?"

Here I may be of some real use. The "sympathetic" are undoubtedly a large group. And though I cannot pretend to represent them in any way, I have much observed them and am rather familiar with the processes involved in this continued, or partial, alienation.

The non-Catholic's alienation—and by the way, to the Protestant the expression "non-Catholic" is exceedingly offensive, since he takes it to mean that he is merely a negative, and is all the more offended if that is what he is—the non-Catholic's alienation is, to begin with, so utter that I doubt if you have any conception of it. Even if he has become "sympathetic" he has obscure resistances all his own, involving party loyalities, traditions and the emotional reactions of ancient wars handed down by a propaganda having nothing in common with the Propaganda Fide. Campaign lies often continue to exert effects even when discredited.

You must remember, too, that the non-Catholic has no experience of Catholic things. He has, as you

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yourself would be among the first to claim, no experimental knowledge of sacraments in other than a figurative sense, save possibly baptism. He has few if any Catholic social contacts. He has a self-flattering habit of thought—the only mental peculiarity about him—which attaches him to his own concepts and "projections." He has been brought up in fear—or possibly merely contempt—of superstition and idolatry, both being defined so as to include the use of all material symbols, and associated with all the curses ever hurled by Hebrew prophets at the worshipers of Baal.

There are no altars in most of his churches, and in none (if he be not a very high "Anglican Catholic") is he led to expect any Real Presence save that created by the minds and decorum of the congregation. He has an absolute horror of intimate spiritual contacts and conversations, which does not abate when he hears them called the means of grace. However religious, he likes to boast that he has "no religion to speak of."

Even when he comes to believe what the Catholic believes, he believes it in a different and more attenuated way. And he has been taught to regard the visible Church as a rival of the invisible; nor is this habit to be overcome by the mere conviction that it is expedient to have a Pope. It is a confession of sins, not of philosophy—an act of will, not of reason—which is required of him. He may have some of the Christian faith, but the non-Catholic is not a Catholic because he has not all of the Catholic faith. It is simple as that. The dogma which he lacks usually, though not always, concerns the keys. He might have faith enough to keep him in the Church, if once he were there. Certainly he might aspire to maintain the grade of the neo-pagan Catholic. But that hardly seems worth the plunge. Such faith would hardly let him in, and he wonders how it keeps anybody in.

Faith, I have been told, is a gift, but I cannot undertake to explain the processes of grace or the workings of Providence, having always understood that these things are inexplicable. As to what you would call the human instruments of grace, the non-Catholic is not likely to come within a psychological mile of them. When he enters a Catholic church edifice and is asked for "seat-money," he is shocked, or tries to be shocked, and perhaps at one and the same time is both disappointed and relieved. Anyway, he begins to think of the theatre, and of the money-changers in the temple.

"This," he says to himself, "is not that infinite house of God of which I have dreamed"—for a non-Catholic often inconsistently expects the Church to be superlatively magnificent even in its human manifestations.

At the same time, he rather looked for a rousing welcome, symbolic of that joy which is in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, even though he has not repented and may not feel that he has anything in particular of which to repent. "How do they know I am not at least seeking to repent?" he continues his inner conversation as he confronts, with what equanimity he can muster, the stony glare of (what seems to him) the self-appointed Lay Committee for the Prevention of the Spread of Catholicism.

He doesn't know, of course, that the Catholics also are sensitive, and are possibly disturbed in their devotions by the intrusion of the profane, of one who may have come to scoff. Having paid for his seat, he feels as a business man that he ought to be considered as having as good a right there as anybody. He may even think he has a right to his money's worth. I don't say that he ought to, merely that he probably does. I am describing the non-Catholic, not the perfect man. It is a chance if he doesn't go further, and expect the congregation to be flattered by his patronage.

If for no other reason than to cease being conspicuous, he would like to kneel when he sees others kneeling, but fears that he will be recognized and held to have committed himself, or be regarded as a hypocrite, or—still worse—resented as one who gives himself the airs of being at home in a club of which he is not a member. The odds are that he gets out as soon as possible and stays out, and the club idea becomes fixed in his mind. The result is that he does not fall under Catholic influence until he becomes a Catholic—a rather paradoxical state of things. And if he meets a pagan Catholic it helps him no more than a broomstick picked up at a Witch's Sabbath.

You will say that he has only to ask in order to be received, that passports cost nothing, whatever may be the price of pews. But this sort of passport seems to him too much like a declaration of intention to become a citizen, and one is usually a tourist first.

I can sympathize with Mr. McGuire. He is, with all his neo-paganism, very jealous for the Lord—or at least for the Church. But by most non-Catholics he would be mistaken for a custodian of the Lord, anxious to keep the Lord inside his holy temple even if the ungodly are thus kept out and encouraged to remain ungodly. He would be regarded as thinking that the Church is not a field hospital but a fort.

The sympathetic non-Catholic, you see, is apt to be a sentimental fellow who rather pities himself. Very seldom is he an Augustine or a Chesterton. And when he feels himself to have been stepped on by a stretcher-bearer in the uniform of the Red Cross, his sympathy murmurs, "Et tu, Brute?" and at least tries to expire. In short, he is an imperfect human being, very like a Catholic in some respects.

Such are some of the processes of sympathy, I believe, though I do not wish you to understand that I have been describing my own. I have, in fact, been trying to keep myself out of the argument as much as possible on Mr. McGuire's account. For—

"One gathers," says Mr. McGuire, "that we innocent bystanders are hereafter to be spared the painful sight of his [Mr. Wickham's] mental and metaphysical contortions."

How painful, indeed, must be the contortions of a lamb bleating upon the hillside to innocence triumphantly preaching paganism from the summit.

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SUNRISE IN THE WEST

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

THE GERMAN, who normally breathed a sigh of relief when the Bruening government managed to organize a supporting coalition, realizes that the triumph may be short-lived. To a far greater extent than can be guessed from a distance, he attributes the general dissatisfaction—as well as the present unsatisfactory state of affairs—to defects in the present ordering of the Reich. International difficulties? Of course. One doubts if a soul could be found between the Baltic coastline and the last mountain town of Silesia who would hold that the Versailles Treaty ought to stand as the final formula of European progress. The weight of the reparations burden is felt everywhere, has grooved itself deeply into the social and political consciousness of sixty odd million people. Nevertheless the consideration which seems to constitute the real strength of the Hitler movement and to activate many who refuse to ally themselves openly with so frenzied a program is the inadequacy, at least the assumed inadequacy, of the modern German democratic system.

It would be futile for an outsider to draw up a tentative list of grievances, or to attempt to pass judgment on them. There are, however, three which make themselves so obvious that an observer can risk pointing them out. The first results from the many-party system of government. Since no one group is strong enough to dominate the Reichstag and to enforce its will, the ministry necessarily depends upon a coalition. This in turn can be achieved only through a constant sequence of compromises, reaching which often demands months of private and public debate. The German citizen therefore gets the impression that his democracy is chiefly a compound of oratory and delay. Possibly the second grievance is of even greater importance. Teutonic bureaucracy—the whole of what is called Beamtentum—has an illustrious past. Its virtue derived largely from the circumstance that appointments came from a monarchical government which did not have to reckon with immediate political support and which could invest even the less consequential life tenures with a kind of halo. Men grew old in the service without losing their diligence, their self-respect or even—to a great degree—their initiative. But does all this remain true under the republican system? Or are men appointed through political influence and left to enjoy a relative sinecure proof against all the challenges of competition? These question are not difficult for the critics to answer. Finally it is widely felt that several of the major parties are now not servants or exponents of ideals, but organizations which it pays to join because of possible lucrative appointments in the distance.

One of the most curious results of this criticism is the somewhat astonishing admiration which thousands of people in Germany have for the United States. Whereas the Frenchman and his newspapers indulge in quite grotesque allusions to Yankee vices and deficiencies, his neighbor to the east is sometimes incapable of marring his vision of a blissful America with a single blot. Part of this feeling is traceable, of course, to political and economic relationships. The instructed German is genuinely grateful to the United States for not having signed the Versailles Treaty, and for having voted financial credit at a time when that alone prevented utter dissolution of the nation. He has a great, almost a naive, faith in American public opinion. This he does not wish to influence through any kind of propaganda. The whole German passion for facts has been marshaled to place at the service of anybody in or from the United States so great a wealth of statistics and documents that several lifetimes would not suffice to absorb a third of it.

But utterly apart from these more or less natural circumstances there exists a spontaneous enthusiasm for American methods and achievements. An illustration was afforded by the truly impressive ceremony in honor of Baron von Steuben—the hero of the Revolution—recently staged in Berlin. So great a crowd came to the Reichstag for the occasion that literally thousands had to be turned away. Many of the disappointed guests proved that *furor Teutonicus* is far from dead, and it is no mistake to declare that a good part of their indignation was due to a frustrated desire to testify in favor of the great republic to the west. This was the theme of the chief address, by one of Germany's most famous orators. What he said is repeated on all sides, even in the half-illiterate jargon of the streets. For the German, America's ethical charm seems to lie in her possession of qualities which the German misses in his own social order. He sees the United States as a country able to determine upon a political policy, right or wrong, and carry it through. He is enthusiastic—even after he has made several reservations—over that spirit of competition in all fields of activity which he misses in the conduct of officialdom in his country. Finally, it is part of his innermost conviction that vastly more pasturage for ideals exists in a nation large and free enough to render service of an ideal separable from the paltry and personal ambitions of a career.

So firmly are these impressions written upon many minds that the American who ventures to shake his head in dissent will be in some danger of being held for a banished miscreant. And of course there is some truth in them. The qualities the German sees in the United States are basic, immemorial blessings of our democracy, however much of them may have oozed

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away under the pressure of civic slovenliness. Modern Germany, given half against its will the task of changing an age-old monarchical government into republican rule, does well to covet the best that democratic theory and example suggest. Apart from this, it is true, one must always reckon with the German need for a vision of some more resplendent reality. Held firm within the limits of a narrow if surpassingly beautiful land, he may be said to look beyond the straight and short furrow he must plow to the horizon upon which all the gold of sunrise has been poured. That is at once his charm, his resource and his limitation. Meanwhile, to be sure, the traveling American is most likely to be conscious of the charm—and to appreciate the fact that harassed, bitterly burdened Germany really and truly takes pleasure in the service of democracy.

THE FLIGHT FROM PURSUIT

By PAUL BUSSARD

PIERROT and Columbine had the world to themselves. Over the countryside there was a hushed expectancy, because all things and the men who owned them were sleeping. It was just before dawn that they were walking east along a narrow road which ran directly east and west; or as some, basing their opinion upon a legend, insisted—the road ran directly west and east.

A little rain, falling down an hour before, had cleansed the grass and all the flowers. And always after a rain there is an amber sky before sunrise. But even Columbine did not escape the feeling of hushed expectancy. The land was like Columbine standing on tiptoe with her hands clasped at her throat. The sun had risen after much the same fashion a great number of times. But the land was never wearied, and like a beautiful woman in love, never completely tired of beholding again the face of her lord and husband.

Pierrot and Columbine had the sensation of somethng about to happen. All the little things, owned by men who were sleeping, awaited it, hushed in their expectancy. Time went slowly for them all. And thus it was that Pierrot was telling little jokes about the incommunicability of the soul, and commenting cynically on the morphology of the fat toads who flopped about the puddles of the road.

Entirely taken up with such pleasant pastime they failed to notice someone who was coming behind them. When they turned about the man waved a top hat to them and hurried up. He was completely and carefully dressed in evening clothes. But his shoes were splashed with mud and his face was flushed. He had evidently not been careful of the puddles in the road and, from the way the veins stood out on his temples, one might have surmised that he had not been especially careful to avoid the puddles of life. And yet he was a young man, and extremely good-looking.

Pierrot greeted him, "Is sunrise usually the end of yesterday in your life?"

Since the young man merely looked at Columbine, Pierrot greeted him again, "I am sure you enjoy a sunrise."

"I would as soon see the liver of a horse spiked to a fence."

They turned about and walked once more toward the east silently, except for an occasional exclamation from Columbine as she narrowly missed stepping into a puddle. The silence was fast becoming the silence of all the little things on either side when Pierrot remarked, "Your pursuit of pleasure seems to have made an ugly sunrise for you. If he is as unrestrained in his morals as he is in his manners, they must be as ugly as he thinks the sunrise is. Still," Pierrot mused to himself, "I have heard it said that lack of restraint can hardly be accounted a fameworthy achievement, any more than can the action of a man taking off his shoes be regarded as an artistic gesture."

"What you are pleased to call a pursuit," said the young man, "is better described as a flight. People only appear to pursue. Were it not that the devil of boredom is an invisible fellow, everyone would plainly see, and doubtless enjoy, the spectacle of an intelligent people in undiginified rout before a miserly devil with a javelin."

"Platitudes cast no shadows," murmured Pierrot.

"I will readily admit the emptiness of pleasure. But if it is wretched and nothing more than a flight from boredom, it is also supremely necessary. I am a starving man hugging his filthy loaf of bread. In a world where there is nothing else, pleasure must do."

"As I observed before," said Pierrot, "platitudes. . . ."

The young man put his hat on his head. "Let me say that I know these things. Distantly I can admire placidness and poise and the charm of repose. I can even see the apparent happiness of one who has faith in a greater end. I would much rather be Francis of Assisi than Machiavelli of Florence. The faith of the Queen of Scots is certainly more to be desired than the pleasure of the Queen of Navarre. I would not hesitate at renouncing pleasure, if I had faith. But I am beggar enough to hug my only loaf of bread even though maggots crawl out of it."

"Ah!" said Pierrot, "you would cease this childishness, if you had faith, so you say. I say you would have faith if you would cease this childishness."

"Paradoxes crack no nuts," murmured the young man.

The earliest rays of the sun came over the land like a mantle lined with gorgeous silk. Every cloud was alive, swimming in color like a monstrous fish. Great golden gulf streams flowed through the ocean of heaven. There was a subtle and diffused light in which any face would look lovely. It turned the puddles into glistening pools of melted gold; trees stood gigantesque and noble against the east. This pleasant light, increased with such subtle and almost imperceptible effects, was like the rising strains of an orchestra preparing the audience for the appearance of a great actor on the stage; or, as Pierrot sometimes humorously observed, like the mounting roll of drums which end in a tremendous crash as the clown tumbles onto the stage.

"Your attitude is admirable," said Pierrot, "and your statement of it pleasingly concise. It should be tested. Now, if I could I would give you faith just to see if you would cease your childishness. But unfortunately faith is a gift beyond my powers of giving. However, although I cannot test the truth of what you say, you can easily test the truth of what I say. For it is but a simple gesture for you to renounce pleasure."

The young man removed his hat. They continued walking in the face of the rising sun. In a few minutes they came to a bridge. Pierrot and Columbine sat down on the bannister to rest while the young man kept walking forward swinging his absurd top hat. When he got beyond hailing distance without looking back, Pierrot, swinging his legs from the bannister of the bridge, began to amuse Columbine with little jokes about the incommunicability of the soul, with quaint anatomical observations about the fish in the stream below.

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CONSERVATIVE VS. RADICAL

By ALEXANDER HARVEY

A CONSERVATIVE may be defined as one who believes in a divine order of the world. A conservative believes that he must direct all his thinking and regulate all his actions in accordance with this divine order.

A radical instinctively dismisses this attitude to life as "religious." And it is true that Christianity is the basis of the action and the thought of the conservative mind—something far more than "mere religion," in the radical sense of the term. The conservative believes thus that he appears in this world according to a divine order realized in his relation to the family primarily. Through the family he sustains relations to the state, relations with the church, relations with the divine and human laws sustaining these.

The fundamental aim of the conservative is, accordingly, to find his proper place in this divine order. In this task he is aided, as he believes, by a source of knowledge never available to the radical mind in its mad pride of intellectuality—divine revelation. The radical mind accepts the teachings of science humbly enough, but it does not seem so readily to concede the validity of what to the conservative mind is the highest wisdom. The conservative mind has thus two sources of knowledge. The radical mind shrinks inevitably from all knowledge that is not obtained through the medium of what it calls "science."

The conservative mind repudiates flatly the fundamental concept of the radical mind. This concept has in fact no reality whatever. It is a concept of an individual, isolated and independent man or persons. There is no such man. There never was such a man. He is as unreal, as preposterous, as impossible as the economic man of the old Victorian political economy. Nevertheless, the radical mind takes for granted this individual man or person—the melancholy phantom of its own reasoning—as the unit of all its agitaton over human rights, political principles and moral obligations.

Repudiating the radical's "man" as the creation of the human intellect merely, the conservative rests his case upon the reality of the man who is in contact with the divine. Only the being whose contacts with the divine are direct is competent to bear the name of man. This man has no rights as an individual or as a person. His rights are derived from his capacity as a son, as a husband, as a father, as a brother, as a servant or as a master. He has rights and he has duties only from the standpoint of a divine order of the world. It is the same with the radical's "woman." The rights of that "woman" are as unreal as that woman herself. The woman of the conservative's world exists as maid, as wife, as sister, as daughter, as mother, as citizen. The radical concept of an independent, self-sustaining and free woman existing in a void is as unreal as is the radical conception of the rights of man. There are no such rights.

It becomes possible now to derive some idea, however faint, of the tactical advantage of the conservative mind over the radical mind. The "man" of radicalism is as gloomy a character as one can find outside of Greek tragedy. He has no place in any order of the world that is real. He does not "belong" to anybody or to anything. He is forever betraying the fact with his peculiar jargon involving what he calls reactions, evolution, psychoses, psychiatry, biology and complexes.

Hence one can usually tell a radical by his vocabulary and by the tendency of his thought toward classifications under novel and fleeting categories. For example he dismisses the state of the conservative consciousness as a "religious complex." If he has a Christianity at all it amounts to no more than sociology of the college settlement type, dealing with the unemployed as a problem in the abstract. God, too, is abstract—more or less a principle. Prayer is mental perception of some "truth"—radical, naturally. The individual is solitary, aloof, unhappy. He moves through an atmosphere of misery from radicalism into Socialism and then on to Communism.

The inducement to "progress" as radical minds define it is comprised in the materialism of its rewards. If we will but be sufficiently radical we shall eat, drink and be merry. If we find ourselves melancholy instead, the radical explains that there has not been time for the success of the great experiment. It is an experiment based upon an ethic eliminating a personal Creator in the divine sense. Man in a most human sense is made the creator. God becomes at the best the principle in accordance with which man does the work of creation, upon the plan evidently of the great whale which boasted that it had made itself. Man is a prisoner in his own vast solitude peopled by masses of his fellow-prisoners—radcals of both sexes—who believe that some day the human race will be "free."

Whatever happens to disillusion the masses with this type of radicalism is ascribed to the bigotry and the intolerance of the conservative elements in society. Insistence upon a divine order of the world is ridiculed as an exploded superstition. Any notion that theology is the queen of the sciences must be left over accidentally from the sixteenth century. It goes without saying that the radical mind is (judged by its own standards) wiser than the conservative mind. The past is viewed with an amused contempt and those who appeal to its lessons are dismissed as inaccessible to the teachings of current events.

Now we need not concern ourselves with the soundness of this radical attitude toward the conservative realities. What interests us is the tactical disadvantage of the radical mind in establishing its "man." He is the most melancholy "man" since Hamlet, far more of a soliloquist, more of a person with wrongs to brood over, more of a state of consciousness affected by ghostly contacts. The wretchedness of the radical man is intensified by his inadequacy to that most poetical of all human relationships—marriage.

Meanwhile the conservative is gazing out upon the divine order of a world in which his concern is to find his place. His concern is with his own task, his own sense of responsibility. He wastes no energy in assaults upon the bulwarks of civilization. He does his duty as son, as brother, as husband, as father, as a citizen. This tactical advantage over the radical gives the conservative his stronger position in our American world. For our American world is a conservative world.

Recovery

Long red leaves upon this tree
Day by day have solaced me.

Blue beneath a flashing wing
Has persuaded me to sing.

Gusts of wind upon the plain
Set a motion in my brain.

A single twist of blazing light
Reimbues my eyes with sight.

Once again I will resume
The web upon my dusty loom.

ANNE HARLEY.

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COMMUNICATIONS

THE "DECAMERON" OF BOCCACCIO

Wauwatosa, Wis.

To the Editor: The book review of "The Life of Giovanni Boccaccio," in the October 1 issue of THE COMMONWEAL recalls the sale of Boccaccio's "Decameron" at the auction of the Duke of Roxburghe's library in 1812.

John, the third Duke of Roxburghe, K.G., had devoted long years and great wealth to the acquisition of books and pamphlets. The celebrated collection known as "the Roxburghe ballads," now in the British Museum, was formerly his. After his death the magnificent library he had brought together during forty years, came to the hammer. Nothing in the annals of book auctions was ever equal to the excitement caused by the publication of the catalogue. All bibliomaniac England was aroused and crowds from far and near filled the duke's house in St. James's Square. The sale, conducted by Evans, lasted forty-two successive days (Sundays only excepted) during May, 1812. Competition was at its height, and bidding rose to a fabulous amount. Many rare specimens of printing, an early Shakespeare, a few Caxtons and De Wordes, wonderful editions of books on theology, poetry, philosophy and the drama, were fought for with spirit and recklessness, but at last what Dr. Dibdin calls "the Waterloo" among book battles commenced when Bossaccio's "Decameron," printed at Venice in 1471, was put up. The book had been bought by the Duke of Roxburghe for 100 guineas and was considered the only faultless copy of the edition in existence. The price it realized at the sale of 1812 was the highest ever given for a book to that date.

"I have a perfect recollection", says Dibdin, "of this notorious volume, while in the library of the late duke. It had a faded yellow morocco binding, and was a sound rather than a fine copy. The expectations formed of the probable price for which it would be sold were excessive; yet not so excessive as the price itself turned out to be. . . . On the morning of the sale . . . Sir Edgerton's carriage conveyed us from Kensington to St. James's Square. The rain fell in torrents, as we lighted from the carriage, and we rushed with a sort of impetuosity to gain seats to view the contest. The room was crowded to excess, and a sudden darkness which came across gave rather an additional interest to to the scene. At length the moment of the sale arrived.

"Evans prefaced the putting up of the article by an appropriate oration, in which he expatiated upon its excessive rarity, and concluded by informing the company of the regret, and even 'anguish of heart,' expressed by Mr. Van Praet (librarian of the Emperor Napoleon), that such a treasure was not to be found in the imperial collection at Paris. Silence followed the address of Mr. Evans. On his right hand, leaning against the wall, stood Earl Spencer; a little lower down, and standing at right angles with his lordship, appeared the Marquis of Blandford. Lord Althorp stood a little backward to the right of his father, Earl Spencer. Such was the 'ground taken up' by the adverse hosts.

"The honor of firing the first shot was due to a gentleman from Shropshire, unused to this species of warfare, and who seemed to recoil from the reverberation of the report he himself had made. 'One hundred guineas!' he exclaimed. Again a pause ensued; but anon the bidding rose rapidly to 500 guineas. Hitherto, however, it was evident that the firing was but masked and desultory. At length all random shots ceased; and the champions before named stood gallantly up to each other, resolving not to flinch from a trial of their respective strengths."

A thousand guineas were bid by Earl Spencer, to which the Marquis added "ten." You might have heard a pin drop. All eyes were turned, all breathing well nigh stopped, every sword was put home within its scabbard, and not a piece of steel was seen to move or glitter, except that which each of these champions brandished in his valorous hand. They parried, they lunged, they leaped; yet their strength was undiminished, and no thought of yielding was entertained by either. Two thousand guineas were offered by the marquis. Then it was that Earl Spencer, as a prudent general, began to think of a useless effusion of blood and expenditure of ammunition, seeing that his adversary was as resolute and "fresh" as at the onset. For a quarter of a minute he paused; when my Lord Althorp advanced one step forward, as if to supply his father with another spear for the purpose of renewing the contest. His countenance was marked by a fixed determination to gain the prize, if prudence, in its most commanding form, and with a frown of unusual intensity of expression, had not made him desist. The father and son for a few seconds conversed apart. Then Lord Spencer bid £2,250. The spectators were now absolutely electrified. The marquis quietly added his "ten" . . . and there was an end of the contest! Mr. Evans, ere his hammer fell, made a due pause; and indeed, as if by something preternatural, the ebony instrument itself seemed to be "charmed or suspended" in mid-air. However, at length dropped the hammer. . . .

"The spectators," continues Dr. Dibdin in his text, "stood aghast! and the sound of Mr. Evans's prostrate scepter of dominion reached and resounded from the utmost shores of Italy. The echo of that fallen hammer was heard in the libraries of Rome, of Milan, and of St. Mark. Boccaccio himself startled from his slumber of some five hundred years; and Mr. Van Praet rushed, but rushed in vain, amidst his royal book treasures at Paris, to see if a copy of the said *Valdarfer Boccaccio* could there be found! The price electrified the bystanders and astounded the public! The marquis's triumph was marked by a plaudit of hands; and presently after he offered his hand to Lord Spencer, saying, 'We are good friends still.' His lordship replied, 'Perfectly; indeed, I am obliged to you.' 'So am I to you,' said the marquis; 'so the obligation is mutual.' He declared that it was his intention to have gone as far as £5,000. The noble marquis had previously possessed a copy of the same edition, wanting five leaves; 'for which five leaves,' Lord Spencer remarked, 'he might be said to have given £2,600.' "

It may be added that, the next evening, sixteen of the leading bibliophilists dined together at the St. Alban's Tavern to celebrate the event. Lord Spencer, the defeated book-hero, filled the chair, and Dr. Dibdin acted as croupier. At this dinner was organized the Roxburghe Club.

A few words tell the subsequent history of the book. In 1819 the Marquis of Blandford had himself to sell his collections, and the wondrous volume for which he had competed so energetically and which he had won so proudly a few years before, at a cost of £2,260, was sold to a London publisher for £918 and transferred by him, at that price, to the marquis's former competitor, the Earl Spencer. It is now at Althorp, the seat of the Spencers, in North Hamptonshire.

EUGENE A. MORAN.

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CRUSADERS OF MERCY

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: I must write you a few words in appreciation of the splendid support given the Humane Trapping Act, in Massachusetts, by your publication. This legislation had been several times defeated by the legislature, and we succeeded finally in getting our bill on the ballot in the election held last Tuesday. We have won a big victory. The act was accepted by the people by a majority of 330,000

One of our problems was to secure a "yes" vote equal to at least 30 percent of the entire number of ballots cast in the election. That is necessary under the provisions of our Initiative Act, through which this question went on the ballot. Our percentage was 49, but we did not anticipate such a heavy vote in our favor, and it seemed highly desirable to secure the support of Catholic voters, who heretofore have not been particularly active in humane matters in this state.

Of course they should be, because a wonderful tradition and set of principles underlie Catholic thought on this broad general question. These were set forth in a circular written by Mr. James F. Desmond, assisted by Mr. David Goldstein, and the substance of this material was utilized by you in THE COMMONWEAL. This tended to crystallize the thought of Catholic voters, with the result that they rallied wonderfully to our support and were an important factor in the result.

I have a feeling that all this had a good effect in making for a better understanding between the two great elements of our common Christian faith, because Catholics and non-Catholics worked shoulder to shoulder for the cause. Humanitarianism should know no creedal barriers, and in this case it did not. For THE COMMONWEAL's part in achieving this happy result, we are most grateful.

HOWARD NOBLE, *Managing Director,*
Massachusetts Division, The Anti-Steel Trap League.

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: Please allow me to thank you for the very fine editorial comment which you made on the effort of the Catholics of Massachusetts to join with their non-Catholic fellow-citizens in placing on the statute books of this state the Humane Trapping Act.

You may or may not know that the Humane Trapping Act was accepted by the electorate of Massachusetts by an actually overwhelming majority. More than 850,000 of the voters who participated in the election voted on this question. This could not have been brought about if the Catholics of this state had not joined hands with the humane societies. This fact they now recognize and they have gone on record to that effect. The value of this you will readily appreciate. And may I say that your fine words of commendation on the efforts of the Catholic committee of laymen who were interested in this project gave it a standing and an influence which it would not have had otherwise.

JAMES F. DESMOND,
Corresponding Secretary, Liberal Civic League.

THE CASE OF HUNGARY

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Lest J. J. Konus's letter to THE COMMONWEAL create a wrong impression and thus bring about a devastating (?) effect in the mind of the impartial reader who might have interested himself in the affairs of Czechoslovakia, it is most expedient, if only from the standpoint of a just defense for the oppressed Slovaks, that some explanation be made forthwith.

It seems, by judging the background of the sprawling and awkward attitude which Konus has taken to the book, "The Tragedy of Trianon," that he is either a "Czechoslovak" (a name assumed by the Bohemians, and which the Slovaks vehemently object to) or a Czech propagandist. He surely cannot be a Slovak, and if one, true at heart, for his repudiation of "The Case of Hungary," in THE COMMONWEAL of November 12, indicates his determined attempt to pile more pathos as well as agony upon the Slovak people of the Czechoslovak Republic.

If one reads "The Tragedy of Trianon" it will be found that what Sir Robert Donald says with reference to the Slovak within the Czechslovak Republic today, is more truth than poetry, and it is utterly absurd to attribute it to sentimentality. While there is no denying the fact that the Slovak people had been under Magyar subjugation for over a thousand years, their sufferings have been all the worse since they have allowed themselves to be courted, wooed and won by the Czechs. Neither the World War nor the successful (?) revolution of the Czechoslovaks who fought the Hungarians has as yet brought liberty to the Slovaks, and judging from conditions in the Czechoslovak Republic today, one cannot doubt that the plight of the Slovaks will be a sad one for the next thousand years.

Educational institutions in Slovakia are reeking with pan-Czechoism and are manned throughout by free-thinking Czechs. The Slovak language is being swept under the carpet while the Catholic religion is made an object of ridicule. True, the Slovaks have become removed from the political influence of the Hungarians, but in so doing they have walked from the frying pan into the fire where they are compelled to heap hot coals upon their heads. They fought for their political, economic and religious freedom while under the Hungarians, but their struggle under the Czech government will inevitably prove to be the last straw if some sort of a miracle fails to happen in the very near future.

Pages upon pages could be written in the attempt to relate the persecution of Professor Tuka, Monsignor Hlinka and other Slovaks who had undergone punishment at the hands of the Czechs for alleged political violations while demanding autonomy for Slovakia, but as long as Czech power remains in force, the story would no doubt be without end.

ANDREJ NOVAK.

THE NEO-CATHOLIC PARTY

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: Browsing in the Business Library not long ago I was looking over some copies of THE COMMONWEAL, and saw the communication in which Denis A. McCarthy is called a "Neo-Catholic." I wasn't sure just what that might mean, but it had a sinister sound, so I looked it up and didn't like the definition well enough to connect it with a fellow-Catholic whom I greatly admire. In the hope that someone had come to his defense I looked through later copies but found nothing, until last week I saw a letter over Dr. McCarthy's own signature. It was good.

Anyone who really knows the man and his work knows that a reflection on the Catholicity of Dr. McCarthy is absurd, and I was forcibly reminded when reading the attack, of an emphatic remark made by the late Reverend Michael J. Doody of Cambridge, not long before his death, to the effect that he knew of no layman in the country who was doing the fine work for the Faith that Denis McCarthy was. That was high praise

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from a lofty source, and the situation today seems much the same as it was then.

On anything touching Church and Faith there is neither minimizing nor slighting with Denis McCarthy in public or in private, and surely it would be well for the Church in America if we had an army of Catholic laymen like him, willing and able—both, mark you—to give a reason for the faith that is in them when among their non-Catholic friends. It is a recognized weak spot in our life as American Catholics that we fail in just that thing, and who will deny that the little trickle of converts to the Church might be made a strong and mighty stream if laymen generally could and would state clearly and courteously the position of the Church on questions that so frequently present themselves when people get together.

"Neo-Catholic" does not apply to Denis A. McCarthy, taking his daily life and work into consideration.

MARY AUGUSTINE DWYER.

DISTRACTIONS OF A CHURCHGOER

Kenosha, Wis.

TO the Editor: Ask Mary Elizabeth Magennis if she ever talked from a Catholic pulpit, and if she affirms an emphatic negative, read her this. She told 1,100 of us last Sunday from this pulpit how "intimately and comfortably she is at home in the household of the Faith" and what a delightful and literary imagination she has during Holy Mass. She went over with a bang. But her dazzling "distractions" carry even further. Telephone calls asking for the address of THE COMMONWEAL have me at the point of distraction.

REV. FRANCIS A. SHEA.

P. S. Let's see more of Miss Magennis in THE COMMONWEAL.

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: In one of your recent articles, "Distractions of a Churchgoer," many of your readers recognized, I am sure, the "stream of consciousness" method made familiar by James Joyce of "Ulysses" fame (or should it be "fame?"). Not that your article has anything in common with Joyce's exhibitionism save the willingness to let the hand set down all the inconsequentialities of the subconscious mind.

The method is effective—sometimes. But there are some strange distractions in the "Distractions." For example, toward the end, the article says: "Now the reading of the Gospel. The two chief altar boys seat themselves."

No doubt several writers have already called your attention to the fact that altar boys, chief or otherwise, who would seat themselves at the reading of the Gospels would be due for a rebuke in most Catholic churches. The ordinary altar boy (in my day as a server, at least) used to be taught to stand at the Gospel just like the rest of the congregation.

Again, still on the Gospel, your article says: "It is a thought from Saint Paul for today." Is not a thought from Saint Paul in the Gospel of the day something new? Of course the Epistle is meant. But no doubt the writer was so distracted she did not know one from the other. And by the way, she missed one of the chief distractions, which is the collection.

DENIS A. MCCARTHY.

The title page and index for Volume XII of THE COMMONWEAL *are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume XII in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the offices of* THE COMMONWEAL.

THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The Tyrant

ONE MIGHT expect a play of considerable dash and fire and color from the pen of Rafael Sabatini. But "The Tyrant" has chiefly color—in the literal sense of costume and setting—astonishingly little dash and only fading embers to take the place of fire. Coming so close after the example of authentic costume drama furnished by the Theatre Guild's production of "Elizabeth the Queen," this Sabatini play seems all the more hollow and artificial.

Sabatini does go counter to many of the pet themes of novelists and playwrights in depicting Cesare Borgia as a character of some worth, although given over frequently enough to the methods of his time in the use of torture and violence. But we are asked to take the young tyrant's own viewpoint, to see him surrounded by intrigue and plots for assassination, by gossip and slander and calumny, by papal governors who forget the source of their authority and themselves seek to rule as petty and absolute tyrants. We are asked to view his acts as attempts at rough justice, and to see him endeavoring to bring strength and law and cohesion into the government of a large part of Italy. To this extent, we must grant the author courage and a reasonably clear purpose. The public has its popular villains as well as its popular heroes, and the writer who attempts to modify an accepted villain runs almost as great a risk of popular disapproval as the one who tries to dethrone and deflate a hero. Whatever the unpleasant truths may be about the Borgia family, it is at least gratifying to find some sort of attempt at saner perspective.

All this, however, has very little to do with the worth of a play as drama and as concentrated illusion. Sabatini takes the ancient themes of Judith and of Delilah and provides us with a heroine who starts out to save the duchy of Solignola by ensnaring the fancy of Cesare Borgia during a siege. Instead of returning, however, with the head of her Holofernes, Panthasilea degli Speranzoni falls deeply in love with Borgia and in the end tries to save him from the very trap she has laid for his abduction. Solignola falls, and its ruler, Count Guido, swears fealty to the Borgias, but at once enters into a plot to poison Cesare. Panthasilea, who is Guido's daughter, learns of this plot, and to end her own disgrace and save Borgia's life, drinks the poison cup herself. Thus the play ends in what might have been tragedy, had the characters at any time emerged as real and had our interest in them and our convictions concerning them ever been aroused.

But for the most part, what with poor direction, a mediocre supporting cast, dialogue that is chiefly bombast and sundry minor troubles—such as the stars and a half-dozen others constantly stumbling over their lines—illusion is never captured. The play, except for rare moments, becomes little more than a costume parade, and what should, theoretically, be its finest moments, descend into a mere series of tedious and quite obvious situations.

The fault lies as much with the author as with the actors and the director. The play fails to keep an essential unity of interest. We are never quite sure whether it is the fair Countess of Solignola or Cesare Borgia who is meant to dominate. Presumably it is the latter—but we see him only on exhibition. We are never sure that he is speaking his real sentiments and for this reason can never share or understand his viewpoint. The problem of the play—that is, the main question to be

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decided by "yes" or "no"—does not rest with him but with the girl. She is the one who must decide between love for Borgia and treachery to her own people. This makes her, dramatically speaking, the chief character. It is always fatal to give a major decision to a minor character. Yet that is precisely what Sabatini has done—and from that initial mistake follow most of the weak points of the play and our sense that Borgia is a gorgeous-puppet, in spite of all that Louis Calhern can do to make him credible and engaging. Lily Cahill does reasonably well as the distraught heroine, but there is not another character in the very large cast who rises above what we might call "the costume point." They are all Broadway actors on parade, raising their voices to artficial pitch and declaiming in a manner that even they would recognize as ridiculous if wearing the drab trousers, collars and neckties of the present. (At the Longacre Theatre.)

Mr. Samuel

I WISH to utter a word of honest lament for the premature passing of a genuinely amusing—if not vastly important—play in which Edward G. Robinson gave us one more of his inimitable character portraits. "Mr. Samuel" was an adaptation by none other than Winthrop Ames from a play by Edmond Fleg which is, or has been, on the repertory of the Comédie Française. There it has been known as "The Merchant of Paris." In adaptation, it was given a New York setting, with its leading character the successful head of large cigar and tobacco interests—an entertaining egotist who runs his brothers and partners to the brink of madness with his visionary schemes and gambling risks with the family fortune, but who manages always to emerge on top, with credit intact and the immediate small world of commerce at his feet.

Incidentally, there is more than this to the minor epic of "Mr. Samuel." There is a revealing, honest and, to my mind, very fine moment in the last act when Samuel, ill and in grave financial danger, suddenly shouts in protest to his daughter "What is there, in the whole wide world, to be afraid of?" Possibly because the world of 1930 is living in the grip of countless petty and nameless fears, this one outburst, uttered in what is actually a Franciscan spirit of detachment from property standards, served to raise the play many degrees above its mild comedy atmosphere and to give it an instant of real grandeur.

It is quite true that Mr. Samuel knows no fear whatever, and that much of his material success has sprung from this very freedom. But his is not the fearlessness of the man without imagination. His singular liberty of soul comes from the fact that he has learned not to cling too closely to material things. For him, business is a splendid adventure. But money and what it will bring mean very little. He is not afraid of returning to poverty—and in that holds the advantage over most of the world he deals with. He is hot tempered, domineering, generous and only very mildly sentimental. He is one of the most authentic characters I have yet seen drawn from the Jew of modern commerce. In his family relations there is quiet dignity and a sense of innate refinement. In business he is as liberal to opponents as to friends. The business world of today counts many such characters—to its own great enrichment.

It is quite possible, of course, to see where the play failed to win instant support. It is written without any true sense of proportion. Mr. Samuel talks too much. As interpreted by Mr. Robinson—undoubtedly one of the most authentic and versatile character actors on our stage today—Samuel never becomes actually monotonous. But he so far outdistances all the other characters in delineation and in interest that the play becomes monologue rather than drama. It suffers from lack of balance—not seriously, but just enough to take the edge off its comedy and also to take some of the meaning from its rich possibilities.

Edward G. Robinson is one of the growing army of artists who are dividing their time between the stage and the talking screen. It is easy to understand how the rapid demise of a by no means bad play of this sort would tend to make Mr. Robinson more than ever a devotee of the screen, with its sounder economics, its growing opportunity for the expression of true artistry and its engaging flexibility. The future of the stage grows less and less promising as it deals body-blows to plays of appreciable character and lustily rewards the box-office pandering of the filth mongers. But most of all, the run of critics are to blame. No matter what the technical shortcomings of this play and its adaptation, there was something superb and full of courageous meaning in Samuel Brisach, and something of high artistry in the way Mr. Robinson projected that meaning across the footlights. To dismiss all this with flippant wisecracks gives us the true measure of New York theatrical criticism. (At the Little Theatre.)

Laughter

IN RESPECT of everything except the all too easy outcome of the story, "Laughter," for which Donald Ogden Stewart has written the dialogue, is one of the best recent examples of the rapidity with which screen technique is advancing toward greater perfection.

The story simply tells of the progressive circumstances leading up to the decision of an ex-chorus girl to divorce her stuffy Wall Street husband and to marry instead a young musician whom she has come to love and appreciate rather too late. Possibly the authors do not realize that the advice which this musician gives the girl at one point, anent eating her cake and having it too, can go much farther—so far, in fact, as to render their chosen ending absurd. What she does is precisely to eat her cake, by marrying her Wall Streeter, when that seems the convenient and appropriate thing to do, and then to rescue her cake again by leaving him when the laughter of life becomes more important and convenient in the form of Paul Lockbridge. As boredom is her sole ground for leaving C. Mortimer Gibson, who is exceedingly kind and considerate of her in his lumbering way, it would be difficult to find a play which is a more direct plea for easy divorce on grounds which are even lighter than incompatibility.

On the other hand, the real excellence of the film lies in the proof it gives that light and scampering dialogue and rather subtle situations (minor ones, of course, and not the gaucherie of the main plot) can be successfully registered on the screen. Compared to the verbal ineptitudes of most pictures, "Laughter" has a hundred spots of delightful nonsense, with unforced satire and humor, all aided and abetted by swift direction and interesting photography. More's the pity that the subject matter is so infantile and inept. (At the Brooklyn Paramount Theatre.)

November

Earth bares her breast and waits the coming scourge
Of cold, all naked-unafraid.
Shall I, in God-sent trial, cringe and cower,
Or be dismayed?

GENE SETON.

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BOOKS

The Way of Youth

The Space of Life Between, by the Reverend Bede Jarrett, O.P. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

THERE is a peculiar talent which shows in the selection of titles and the writing of dedications and prefaces. In its highest and most exquisite form it was possessed by Cardinal Newman perhaps more than by any other writer of the nineteenth or twentieth century. Who can shake off from memory all the associations embedded in such headings as "The Second Spring" or fail to be thrilled by the dedicatory letters to Church or Pusey? Father Bede Jarrett shares this talent to a remarkable degree, as is evident from this title of his latest book and the charming letter which serves to introduce and explain it. The former he owes to his retentive memory, having come across it presumably when reading long ago the preface to "Endymion," from which he quotes on the fly-leaf: "The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted; thence proceeds mawkishness, and all the thousand bitters which those men I speak of must necessarily taste." The genius of Keats illuminates the titles taken from its context. The charm of Father Jarrett in the introductory letter, simple, direct, tender, tells the story and purpose of the slender volume with engaging attractiveness.

The book is frankly an effort to answer the myriad questions that surge up in the heart and brain of adolescent youth. It is spiritual direction of the highest type divested of any of that tone which is liable to be dubbed cant by its recipients and to be forthwith rejected. And, oh, what a relief from the ordinary run of books generically catalogued under the caption, "What every young man should know," and which offend by their crudity or their sanctimonious prurience. For while Father Jarrett faces every one of the difficulties and dangers of male adolescence, he does so in a way calculated not to offend the most delicate sense of propriety. His treatment of the most burning problems of youth is characterized by refinement and sanity. Throughout it all runs the unction of a deep spirituality.

In fact the book begins with properly orientating the young man toward God: and the solution of some of the most perplexing problems is sought by working back from God. Thus, for example, in considering death (p. 162): "The simplest way to unriddle most things is to leave them alone. Begin at the other end. Start by remembering that your life is a gift to you from God. That is certain. Well, because it is God's gift to you, you ought to think highly of it and value it. It is to be used . . . and if not used to the full, will be requited against us at the judgment day. . . . It shows you at once that you ought not, from God's point of view, to desire to die, to desire to end God's gift, etc."

A glance at the table of contents will show that no problem has been overlooked or shirked: self-indulgence, women, love, marriage, friendship, wine, purity. The following extract will indicate the sanity and spirituality of treatment: "After all, much as man may be troubled by sex problems or whatever we may care to call them, he has other difficulties to face. Impurity is not the only sin, nor is it the worst sin. We may easily get in the way of being obsessed by this one form of evil, and forget that it is merely one of the many enemies with which we are at war. Indeed the Catholic Church has taught always, that though all sin is evil, spiritual sins are, on the whole, worse than carnal sins: that pride, for example, is more deadly and despair more destructive than sins of the flesh. Consequently we must look upon Our Lady not only as an example to us of chastity, but also of all the other virtues."

The book sparkles with epigrammatic sentences crowded with meaning. The harassed confessor, the perplexed schoolmaster, the anxious parent or guardian will find in it much for which to be profoundly grateful. The casual reader will be repaid by many passages of lovely English prose undefiled.

But what of its appeal to the American boy? Father Jarrett countered the request of his young friend by asserting that English youth would not read such a book, and was met by the hot assertion that they would. We wonder whether the same will be true of American boys. They are practically confronted by the same difficulties and involved in the same dangers. Are they of fine enough fiber to grasp what is here set forth so delicately yet so persuasively? Or would it be the case of a keen-edged razor cutting stone? This much is certain—not only will "men of mature imagination" rejoice in reading this book but they will do a lasting service to those of their young friends "in the space of life between" whom they can lift up to the high plane on which it is written.

JOSEPH H. MCMAHON.

Russian Contrasts

Women and Monks, by Joseph Kallinikov; translated by Patrick Kirwan. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.75.

Quiet Street, by Michael Ossorgin; translated by Nadia Helstein. New York: The Dial Press. $2.50.

HERE are two Russian novels which are supposed to represent the new trend in Russian literature, and both of which have been proclaimed by some critics as comparable to Tolstoy's and Dostoievsky's best works.

How a book like "Women and Monks" can have found admirers is incomprehensible. There is neither talent, nor spirit of observation, nor sense of decency in it. It is simply obscene —and if one wants to read obscene works there are many others better written and more entertaining than this acount of a clergy's licentiousness and lack of moral feelings and moral principles.

The book is not even interesting, and it is absolutely untrue. This is not said with the desire to whitewash the Orthodox clergy, for there are black sheep among its numbers as among all clergy. But, although I know Russian monasteries well and lived for years close to one, I have never head of anything approaching the sort of life Mr. Kallinikov presents to us. In fact such a life would have been impossible, for popular feeling was antagonistic to the monks in Russia during the fifteen years or so which preceded the outbreak of the revolution, and they were looked upon by the middle class with great prejudice. Such a book is only disgusting; it is an outrage in its conception as well as in its details, and in addition it is as dull as it is immoral and repugnant.

Very different is "Quiet Street," chosen by the Book of the Month Club as its October selection. This description of life in Russia under Soviet rule is a masterpiece. It is a real work of art, written with reverence, knowledge of its subject, and exquisite tact. There is not one word in this long story to which one could take exception. It is beautiful from beginning

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to end—one of these books one would like to have always at hand, a book which rises to Shakespearean eloquence in its descriptions and which rivals Greek plays in its sense of tragedy and its acknowledgment of human powerlessness in presence of certain misfortunes, certain sorrows, certain miseries.

Tolstoy never did anything better than, for instance, the dreadful story of the peasant Zavalishin, who in search of a living accepts the functions of public executioner under the Bolsheviks and exercises them as mechanically and with as little compunction as he would do anything else in the way of a job; but who cannot bring himself to slaughter a pig his wife had fattened a whole winter, in order to have an Easter treat in hungry Moscow; and who finally dies in a hospital from a hemorrhage doctors cannot stop, drowned in blood as red but not as pure as that he had spent his nights in spilling. The entire incident is handled with such delicacy, such pity, such a beautiful sense of proportion, that it neither shocks nor revolts one. It only brings a realization of the horrors which at times sully God's earth.

The knowledge of human nature, displayed by Mr. Ossorgin in "Quiet Street," is extraordinary in its precision and even more amazing in its penetration. This is shown, for instance, in a dialogue between two officers, both derelicts of the war, one blinded and the other having lost both legs and arms. They sit together and talk, and express their despair at being still alive while in reality dead, because they can neither enjoy life nor make themselves useful in it. And they evoke images of the "might have been"—of the girls they could have loved and had loved in the past, of all that they had hoped and meant to do in never-forgotten days when they were human creatures able to move about, as those crowds who pass them by in the streets. And they make comparisons between themselves, as to which one is worse off—the boy who cannot see, or the man whose body has shrunk to a trunk.

These are terrifying pages, but one reads them without any other feeling than intense pity. The book is too real to be even analyzed. It is human, it is true, it has been lived through and endured, as well as written. All its characters also are exquisitely described. The girl Tanyusha could have been one of Turgenev's heroines, so tenderly is she handled. All the incidents which pass before one's eyes are so poignantly simple and tragic, that none but a great artist could have conceived them.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

Humanism Explained

The Dilemma of the Liberated: An Interpretation of Twentieth-Century Humanism, by Gorham Munson. New York: Coward-McCann Company. $3.00.

THIS is a spirited defense of American humanism, which, because of its unostentatious birth and its rapid growth, passed unnoticed, until the land was filled during the last few years with the echoes of its conflicts with naturalism. Anybody who conceives of American humanism in terms of the tolerant fastidiousness of Erasmus or the sweetness and light of Matthew Arnold will have missed its character and its consciousness of missionary aims. It has a vital message. It is an impatient rejection and repudiation of the genteelness and smugness of Victorianism, the self-sufficiency of the illuminati of the scientific era and the brass-band blatancy and coarseness of the Mencken wing. It is a New World view, or an Old World view refurnished to cope with the intolerance and obscurantism, which, in the revered names of science, liberty,

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progress, education, service and humanity, had assumed the function of dictating to Americans what they should do and think. It is a thoroughly aggressive movement that does not pick its opponents but takes on all comers.

The author of this book narrates the history of humanism, its undiscriminating fury and its joy in battle. It is an all-embracing effort at sound criticism of men and matters and is not deterred from its task by the glamour of great names or veneration for established institutions or conventions. It is a critical but not a destructive movement. Its impatience is directed against the intellectually new-rich who have come into prominence through the products of recent scientific and social advances and who assume to dictate to their betters in matters of conduct and opinion. To put these parvenues in their place demanded a revaluation of life in terms of philosophy, literature and art, and to this task the humanists have set themselves cheerfully and valiantly.

American humanism is not opposed to science or progress or education: it merely desires to point out that none of these things, or of many other of the idols offered to a confiding public, is an end in itself but merely part of a greater whole which it is necessary to find if the world is to attain happiness and to retain its sanity. This book is filled with sparkling descriptions of the jousts and forays of the small band of humanists with the naturalists and the embattled upholders of mechanistic and materialistic conceptions of the universe. The new humanists scorn all alliances with neo-classicists, humanitarians, behaviorists, romanticists, pschoanalysts, mediaevalists and professional reformers. They aim at something deeper, more permanent and less lopsided than what these enthusiasts have to offer. "We need cryingly," says Mr. Munson, "more gifted amateurs among our laymen who study science and fewer intolerant 'gospelers' of the type of Harry Elmer Barnes."

While the goal of the humanists is a lofty one in trying to turn the light of criticism on current tendencies, trends and theories, they are not without a constructive program, at the heart of which is the thought and tenet that man is not a mere plaything of the blind and inconsiderate forces of the physical world or a mechanism that merely registers impulses derived from social environment. Because they have a definite program the humanists are a party to be reckoned with, and because of their enthusiasm they are compared to the Menckenites, the Deweyites and the followers of Mr. Barnes, as a regiment of marines to a convention of shriners.

This book gives rise to the suspicion that they are becoming self-conscious and that they are to that extent in danger of becoming sectarian in outlook and pose. This would be a calamity as they undoubtedly have a mission, which, if the flippancy may be pardoned, is to rid the earth of much "bunk" and of many of the pestiferous tribe of "debunkers." There is, also, perhaps, a danger that the new humanists may become dogmatic or, at least, it would seem so from some of Mr. Munson's statements. While he does not assert in so many words that Irving Babbitt and the new humanists are blood brothers and soul mates of Mr. Belloc and Mr. Chesterton, he does find some affinities between them, which are not consistent with his pronouncement, that "Humanism can never merge into religion by a mere extension of itself . . . there exists a chasm between the two which the new humanist *qua* humanist can never leap."

Does the new humanism, *qua* humanism, tolerate the cleft infinitive, or do the individual Olympians occasionally nod?

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Founts of Wisdom

Selections from Mediaeval Philosophers: I. From Augustine to Albert the Great; edited and translated by Richard McKeon. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $1.00.

THE TREASURES of mediaeval thought are for the most part inaccessible to a vast number of intelligent readers because, with few exceptions, they still lie hidden in ponderous Latin tomes on the shelves of great libraries. Comparatively few persons are equipped for the task of exploring the contents of those great volumes of mediaeval lore. On the other hand, many serious students are eager to learn, if they could but reach the sources, how the leading thinkers of the past have attempted to solve the problems of philosophy and life.

Professor McKeon has made an effort to acquaint the English-speaking world with some, at least, of those sources by translating selected portions of them into the vernacular.

The present volume is published in the Philosophical Series which Professor Ralph Barton Perry is editing for Charles Scribner's Sons' Modern Library. The editor and translator, Richard McKeon, assistant professor of philosophy in Columbia University, promises a second volume as a sequel to the volume under review. That will comprise further passages selected from the works of mediaeval philosophers posterior to Albert the Great. A gloss of words will be appended to that second volume which will, no doubt, prove helpful for reference in cases where the English translation of technical Latin terms offers a possible misunderstanding of the text.

In this volume selections are published from nine different mediaeval writers, to wit: Saint Augustine, Boethius, John Scotus Erigena, Saint Anselm, Peter Lombard, Peter Abelard, Robert Grosseteste, the Pseudo-Grosseteste and Albert the Great. All the selections have been chosen with a view to presenting the teaching of these authors on the problem of knowledge. They are not intended to offer a broad survey of their philosophical views, still less does Professor McKeon pretend to give a general view of mediaeval thought by illustrating its various phases.

The translator had used careful discrimination in choosing appropriate passages from representative writers. The problem of making a proper selection from an abundance of relevant material must have been a difficult one. Professor McKeon has performed that task well. No less worthy of remark is the skill he manifests in finding apt English equivalents for highly idiomatic expressions such as one invariably encounters in the works of mediaeval writers. The English translation runs smoothly yet a comparison with the original shows that the translator spared no pains in following his text as literally as possible.

Each of the early thinkers represented in the "Selections" is introduced to the reader in a short essay by the translator. The general purpose of the work as well as limitations of space obviously ruled out an extended discussion of the philosophical and historical significance of individual writers. However, Professor McKeon has endeavored to present within the prescribed limits a succinct account of the salient features of their thought.

Unquestionable though his success as a translator may be, one cannot but feel dubious about his prefaces. It is not a deficiency of learning or information, though I should like to know his authority for certain historical statements like this one concerning Robert Grosseteste: " . . . at the time of his death he had suffered excommunication at the hands of Innocent IV." The spirit of sympathy so indispensable for historical study, though not wholly lacking, is rather weak. "Flippant"

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would be too strong a term to apply to his style and "nonchalant" would perhaps be unfair. But there is something resembling both flippancy and nonchalance in his obvious efforts to be witty when dealing with a serious subject. An illustration in point is the following remark in the preface to his selection from Saint Augustine: "The life of a saint shall be interrupted in spiritual luxury and spiritual fornication." And it is simply false to say that the Doctor of Hippo taught that "God intended the soul to have fallen into the error of pride before it should find grace and salvation."

These defects mar what would otherwise have been an excellent work. Still they are not so serious that a judicious teacher using this book as a text for his students, could not readily correct them. He would then pass on to the texts themselves, gratefully acknowledging his debt to the editor and translator of these "Selections."

GERALD B. PHELAN.

Statement of a Crisis

The World's Economic Dilemma, by Ernest Minor Patterson. New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Company. $3.50.

A GREAT deal was being written a few years ago by the popularizers of science about the wonderful progress of man's history in the last hundred years. Many of the more shallow, but none the less blatant, proclaimed as an evidence of man's tardy emancipation from shackles of fear and superstition, the quickening speed of change in man's condition. Graphically they might have represented this as a line going along for many centuries at a very slightly rising incline, then in a little over half a century, following the industrial revolution and the theory of evolution, suddenly turning up at a sharp, almost vertical trajectory. The steam engine, the factory, the modern city, slums, electricity, the automobile, telegraph, telephone, airplane and radio all were added to a human life which, outside of fashions in dress and customs, had varied little from the dawn of history. That is to say, the speed of the interrelation of lives that had been conducted uniformly at a walking gait or the speed of a horse and vehicle or sailing ship, was suddenly released from this old tempo. The war capped all this technological improvement, or alleged improvement, by making the speed of the interrelations of humans intent on killing each other, vastly heightened and complicated, not to say, with bitter irony, effective.

This very speed of our present history, or change of conditions in the world, is illustrated without the author's design by the latest book of Mr. Ernest Minor Patterson, chairman of the department of economics at the University of Pennsylvania and president of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. The presses cannot turn fast enough (we might almost say the mind of man cannot turn fast enough) to keep up with the turn of events. Mr. Patterson, seeking to give a comprehensive survey of the economic problems of the day, is left rather far behind by the daily newspapers. We have all been reading reports of Russia's efforts at dumping of commodities, especially of wheat. Mr. Patterson has this to say: "It will be noticed that Russia which was in pre-war days a source of food supply has sharply declined in importance, her exports of wheat, barley, oats and maize having nearly disappeared." This is not an isolated example. It is something which we fear must by necessity be more or less typical of such attempts at timely books, and undermines our faith in the conclusions of the author. He cannot keep up with the

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more instantaneous means of distributing information by press and wire and ether today, nor does he take the time or comprehensive view that allows of general philosophic conclusions. In other words, he asserts no controlling domain of ideas and, seeking solely to deal with facts, finds himself breathlessly left behind by them in a bewildered and somewhat despairing mood of fatalism.

The result of over three hundred pages of charts, maps, tables and statements is that some form of international adjustment must be found to ease the present troubles of international trade. Mr. Patterson sees four factors accomplishing this: commercial treaties, cartels or financial consortiums, international chambers of commerce, and the League of Nations. "Many plead for the application of the Christian ethic," he says. "This may be the answer but it is difficult to avoid the suggestion that while in individual and domestic problems the success of Christianity is at least debated, in the international field it is seldom mentioned." We wonder if Mr. Patterson seriously believes that the lay ethics of chambers of commerce and Rotary Clubs are something new, and that Christian ethics have no influence in the lives of men who, whatever imposing titles they may give their collective efforts, individually decide every day between selfish predatory enterprise or stewardship in the spirit of Christ's admonitions? Treaties and cartels are signs of hope only in proportion to the spirit that moves them, which is something, whether mentioned seldom or frequently, more important and enduring than charts, statistics and the ephemeral news of combinations.

FREDERIC THOMPSON.

Novelists Revalued

Five Masters: A Study in the Mutations of the Novel, by Joseph Wood Krutch. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, Incorporated. $3.50.

THERE are times when the brief literary essay on this or that poet, dramatist, novelist or essayist, must seem the most futile of all forms of composition. It is a form relatively unknown to the ancients and rarely practised prior to the time of Dr. Johnson. It flourishes as never before in this age of ours, in which writing and reading are not only more widespread but also, in general, more hurried and slipshod than in former times. Seldom does it present information that is not more conveniently available in encyclopedias and other dry but trusty guides. Still more infrequently does it advance an attitude that has both novelty and logical substance. It is manufactured in quantity, one is often tempted to suspect, because it is so easy to turn out, passably dressed up, and it circulates widely because it is read as a cheap and painless substitute for a first-hand acquaintance with its subject.

To one who is in the dismal mood expressed in the above paragraph, Mr. Krutch's new book of essays on Boccaccio, Cervantes, Richardson, Stendhal and Proust presents a happy surprise. It is free from most of the vices that have made the literary causerie appear to be one of the dullest and most pernicious forms of writing. And if it is misused by readers who are looking for canned responses to famous works, that is scarcely Mr. Krutch's fault. After all, he has a critic's reputation to maintain and a living to earn, and this opus will help him do both. It is solidly informative; the biographical sections of the studies are handled with authority as well as with brilliance. The reader may well be grateful for the facts about Proust, a novelist about whom more is generally said than is known.

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Furthermore, Mr. Krutch has done much more than to present a series of mere "appreciations" of his five masters, chosen apparently at random. He has made a decided contribution to the history of the technique of the novel. Other writers have attempted to do for the form of the long prose fiction what ancient critics did very thoroughly for the epic and tragedy, and what modern experts have with some success done for the short story. But so far the novel has not yet been properly isolated and defined as a type, and possibly it cannot ever be. But here Mr. Krutch has shown how the problem, so bewildering at present, may be profitably attacked in the future. He has indicated clearly how both the matter and the manner of the "Decameron" resulted from Boccaccio's temporary yielding to his intense natural enthusiasm for the flesh, how "Don Quixote" took its inevitable form from Cervantes's frustrated idealism, how Pamela and Clarissa expressed more tellingly than their author could have imagined, the rather sordid social ideals of the middle classes of the eighteenth century. In all five cases he has demonstrated in detail how the structure as well as the content of the novel was determined by the semi-conscious reaction of the author to the accepted standards of his time. The book is a valuable document in psychological and aesthetic literary criticism.

As was to be expected of the author of "The Modern Temper," Mr. Krutch writes with both gusto and a measure of elegance. The reader may often quarrel with his somewhat glibly assured "modern" attitudes but he cannot fail to be impressed and stimulated by the book as a whole. It is to be recommended to everyone who has already done at least a little reading in the five masters under discussion.

ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR.

The Xaverian Brothers

Men and Deeds: The Xaverian Brothers in America, by Brother Julian, C.F.X. New York: The Macmillan Company. $6.00.

THAT the mills of God grind slowly but exceeding small might serve as the motto for the work of the Xaverian Brothers in America and certainly, to those pious, patient men who began that work here in 1839, it might almost have seemed as though God's mills had ceased to grind altogether at times, so far as their order was concerned. It might have seemed so, that is, but for their impregnable faith.

Those who, like Brother Julian, our author, can look back over the years intervening between the first coming to America of Brother Francis Xavier (Theodore Ryken), with his dream of a mission to the Indians and the present great system of Xaverian schools and colleges up and down the land and their penetration into every rank and class of American childhood, must have a keen sense of the exceeding smallness of the grinding of the Divine mills.

The dream of the founder was diverted from the Indians to the white youth of our country and the broad-minded and humble spirit which he showed in his willingness to give up his personal ambition and undertake the immediate task under the guiding hand of God has remained with his successors ever since in all their undertakings. Wherever they have been called to meet an immediate need they have gone, however great the material difficulties to be encountered.

An introduction by Archbishop Curley of Baltimore, lends additional interest to this valuable record in which "every moment had its deed and every deed its hero."

R. BURNHAM CLINTON.

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Briefer Mention

The Half Way Sun, by R. F. Barton. New York: Brewer and Warren, Incorporated. $5.00.

THE RECENT uprising of the Formosan aborigines lends some timeliness to Mr. Barton's account of his experiences among the head-hunters of Luzon in the Philippines—indeed he is inclined to believe that these latter and the Japanese islanders derive from the same ethnological source. The American government has been unable to suppress this peculiar adherence to ancient and tribal customs of vengeance. Among the Ifugaos, whom Mr. Barton most minutely describes, the practice is still extant and even the fear of punishment by death or imprisonment has failed to eliminate it. However head-hunting, the author cynically explains, never cost as many lives as the automobile. Both before and after the expeditions long ceremonies and consultations of omens are necessary and such form a large part of the native's culture (the word is Mr. Barton's). It is in the name of culture that he would excuse head-hunting whereas the only extenuation lies in the fact that the native is still uninfluenced by any sense of wrong-doing. There is much material in "The Half Way Sun" for study, but its treatment is marred by the inclusion of both case histories and academic discussions. Mr. Barton, however, is really an authority and this book should have an appeal for those interested in the South Sea Islanders.

The Yoke of Life, by Frederick Philip Grove. New York: Richard R. Smith, Incorporated. $2.00.

WERE "The Yoke of Life" Mr. Grove's first novel one would unhesitatingly, if tritely, term it "promising." There is excellent material here for several novels but the confusion of purpose of its hero, Len Sterner, is no greater than the confusion of the author. The latter has attempted to blend elements which of their very nature defy merging. Considered separately, three distinct sections are finely treated but from the dissimilar viewpoints of the realistic, the subjective and the idealistic. Considered as a whole the book is chaotic and everything in it suffers in consequence—a result which is more deplorable because Mr. Grove, had he settled beforehand on a definite unity of character and environment, could have easily produced a noteworthy work.

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